



Motor Carrier Attachment 3:

AAAffordable Interview

Baltimore, MD; 11/1/2016

HWY17MH007

(68 pages)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of:

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SCHOOL BUS/COMMUTER BUS CRASH IN
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND ON
NOVEMBER 1, 2016

Accident No.: HWY17MH007

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Interview of: CAROL WILLIAMS and
TRACEY STEPHENSON

46 Franklinton Road
Baltimore, Maryland

Tuesday,
November 29, 2016

APPEARANCES:

MICHAEL FOX, Highway Accident Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

SANDRA CARSON, Esq.
Attorney for AA Affordable

CAROL WILLIAMS, Chief Executive Officer
AA Affordable

TRACEY STEPHENSON
AA Affordable

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I N T E R V I E W

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2 MR. FOX: Today is November 29, 2016. This is Investigator
3 Michael Fox out of the Washington D.C. office for the National
4 Transportation Safety Board. I'm located at 46 South Franklinton
5 Road in Baltimore, Maryland, at the principal office of
6 AA Affordable. I'm going to be interviewing the principals of the
7 company. And for the record, we'll go around and introduce each
8 person that's here. Go ahead, ma'am.

9 MS. WILLIAMS: Carol Williams, W-I-L-L-I-A-M-S.

10 MR. FOX: Tracey?

11 MS. STEPHENSON: Tracey Stephenson, S-T-E-P-H-E-N-S-O-N.

12 MS. CARSON: Sandra Carson, C-A-R-S-O-N, attorney for
13 AA Affordable.

INTERVIEW OF CAROL WILLIAMS

14
15 BY MR. FOX:

16 Q. Okay. Thank you all for being here today. We're going to go
17 through the driver file for Mr. Chappell and discuss some of the
18 paperwork and have a series of questions. So, ma'am, if you can,
19 and for the record again, you are the CEO of the company?

20 A. That is correct.

21 Q. Okay. And during our last interview, it's my understanding
22 you purchased some routes from your father. Is that correct?

23 A. I'm sorry. Explain. I purchased them when?

24 Q. When you -- when the company started, you bought some buses
25 from your father. Is that correct?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And what was the name of that company?

3 A. Ferguson Bus Company.

4 Q. And that is your father's name?

5 A. My father.

6 Q. So -- and what is your father's full name?

7 A. Edward Ferguson.

8 Q. Edward Ferguson. And he had routes for the school systems?

9 A. For only Howard County.

10 Q. Only for Howard County, okay. And is that company still in
11 existence?

12 A. No, sir.

13 Q. No. When did that dissolve?

14 A. Oh, I don't know the exact date.

15 Do you remember the exact date?

16 MS. STEPHENSON: Maybe around 2004.

17 BY MR. FOX:

18 Q. 2004. Okay. And do you know if Mr. Chappell, did he ever
19 work for your father?

20 A. No, sir, not that I remember.

21 Q. Not that you remember. Is he around today that I might be
22 able to talk to him?

23 A. No, sir. Uh-uh.

24 Q. Do you have a phone number?

25 MS. STEPHENSON: I don't think -- we didn't, we didn't meet

1 Mr. Chappell till 2014.

2 MS. WILLIAMS: 2014 is the first I remember --

3 BY MR. FOX:

4 Q. 2014 is when you first met and interviewed Mr. Chappell?

5 A. Mr. Chappell, right, um-hum. He's a city driver. We didn't
6 have a city contract. He never had a city contract.

7 Q. Your father never had it?

8 A. He only had motor coaches and school buses.

9 Q. School buses. And the routes that he had were for Howard
10 County?

11 A. Right.

12 Q. Okay. And what we wanted to do today is review your hiring
13 process for the school systems. Can you kind of walk me through
14 and show me the paperwork? When you bring in a driver, what is
15 the procedure?

16 A. Okay. So if a driver comes in, the first thing we ask them,
17 do they have a CDL license and a DOT card.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And they'll fill out an application. And if they have one,
20 we'll take a copy of it. If not, we'll send them to get a DOT
21 card. If their DOT card went out, then we'll send them to go get
22 another. And then we'll do a pre-employment one for everybody
23 across the board.

24 Q. Okay. So just for clarification, you say a DOT card. Is
25 that a DOT medical card?

- 1 A. It's a medical examiner's certificate.
- 2 Q. Okay. And then the other thing you said was they need a --
- 3 A. CDL license.
- 4 Q. And then --
- 5 A. A valid CDL license and a driving record.
- 6 Q. Oh, and then a driving record?
- 7 A. Yes, sir.
- 8 Q. And is that something that you pull yourself, the driving
- 9 record, or does the driver bring that to you?
- 10 A. The driver should bring it to us.
- 11 Q. And what kind of copy do you accept? Do you accept a --
- 12 A. The original should be a complete.
- 13 Q. Original complete. Is that like a 7-year history on the
- 14 driver?
- 15 A. However long, the complete history.
- 16 Q. Complete driver history.
- 17 A. Complete.
- 18 Q. You ask for -- it's not DMV. You guys call it MV?
- 19 A. Same thing, the MVA.
- 20 Q. MVA.
- 21 A. Um-hum.
- 22 Q. I don't know why I get that mixed up. MVA. So you asked for
- 23 a certified copy from MVA?
- 24 A. Yes, sir.
- 25 Q. Original?

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. And you asked for the complete history?

3 A. Yes, sir.

4 Q. Okay. And then what happens?

5 A. And then, we will submit to them -- we will submit a request
6 to Baltimore City to see whether or not this person is or is not
7 certified to drive.

8 Q. Is that done by a form?

9 A. Yes, it is.

10 Q. Is that the add and -- add and drop form?

11 A. No. It is -- well, let me just make sure. Let me see what
12 does it say on it.

13 Q. So it's a form -- it's a city form?

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. This is a form that's generated by the city?

16 A. Correct.

17 Q. So it's the City of Baltimore School System Transportation --
18 excuse me -- Department of Pupil Transportation Safety Office
19 Request for Information?

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. And this is their form?

22 A. Correct.

23 Q. And then you fill out the top portion --

24 A. Yes, sir.

25 Q. -- for all the applicable items? You put in contract, which

1 would be your company, AA Affordable, and then you put in the
2 driver, in this case, Glen Chappell. And it's going to the Safety
3 Office, and then it has like nine bullet items here: a physical,
4 MVA record, copy of CDL, preservice, et cetera.

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 Q. And then describe what happens. Does this --

7 A. Then they'll send us -- then once we send this, we're not
8 allowed to write below the line.

9 Q. Gotcha.

10 A. Then they will tell us whether or not this person is or is
11 not certified and if the person is missing something.

12 Q. So if you're missing, let's say, their physical or they're
13 missing a copy of their preservice or whatever, one of these
14 items, then they'll check it off and send it back to you saying
15 this is missing for their driving -- driver record?

16 A. Yes, sir. Right. So we'll send it like that. Correct.

17 Q. So this is the one that --

18 A. Fax it over.

19 Q. This is the one that came back for the driver?

20 A. No. This is one we sent over to them. This is the one that
21 came back. It's the same as that. This is just a receipt of when
22 we send --

23 Q. Right.

24 A. -- something over there.

25 Q. Gotcha.

1 A. And they'll come back and say yes or no or he needs an
2 updated whatever, might need an updated class, might need an
3 updated CDL --

4 Q. Right.

5 A. -- which we'll furnish them the updated CDL, whatever it is
6 that they request, if they request anything. And then we will add
7 them to an add list after that.

8 Q. Right. And then that's considered to be added to the board,
9 the driver board?

10 A. Yes, sir.

11 Q. Now, do you conduct a pre-employment drug test?

12 A. Do I conduct a pre-employment drug test? Drug test? Usually
13 I do send them for the drug and alcohol and the -- Lord Jesus, why
14 am I acting up? Yes.

15 Q. I think it's in your records.

16 A. It is.

17 Q. He has to have a pre-employment drug test.

18 A. Yeah, you have to.

19 Q. Right. So you do, you do that.

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. And did they -- is that account set up by you or is that set
22 up by the city?

23 A. I pay that.

24 Q. You pay that.

25 A. I pay that, or they pay it and we reimburse them. So -- but

1 that pre-employment, that's mine.

2 Q. Right.

3 A. That comes to me.

4 Q. Okay. Now when I first visited here, you had maybe five or
5 six control forms, these --

6 A. Yes, sir.

7 Q. -- but you did not have the receipt of the drug test. You
8 just had the CCF.

9 A. Yes, sir.

10 Q. And that's when we called Concentra --

11 A. Yes, sir.

12 Q. -- and they brought in the drug test results.

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 Q. Was there a reason that you didn't receive a copy of the drug
15 test?

16 A. When I don't receive -- for the pre-employment --

17 Q. And the randoms.

18 A. -- they will send them to me, but the randoms they do not.

19 So if I do a random, like we did for him on January the 13th, we
20 send him for the random, they'll just -- they'll receive a notice
21 from Baltimore City that says employee notice of scheduled drug
22 test, Baltimore City Public School System, it says on there. And
23 it says the date that he has to go, and the time span that he has
24 and what type of test it is. Then he would bring me the receipt
25 that he went --

1 Q. Um-hum.

2 A. -- and with the date, which verifies the date on there, but
3 we don't get the results because it's not ours.

4 Q. Because --

5 A. He's in a random pool.

6 Q. And he's in the --

7 A. Consortium.

8 Q. -- city's -- he's in the city --

9 A. Consortium.

10 Q. -- consortium for the city?

11 A. Yes, sir.

12 Q. So you don't get a copy of that drug test?

13 A. Correct. Right.

14 Q. Now you say you do get a copy of the pre-employment?

15 A. Only the one that I purchased, yes, sir.

16 Q. Okay. Because I don't remember seeing a copy. That's why we
17 asked for that.

18 A. All right. So he came here with this. Was it 2014 or 2015?
19 Glen Chappell. Okay. So this is the one he came here with.

20 Q. Yeah. According to my recollection, he had a pre-employment
21 on 2/3 of 2014.

22 A. Correct. That's here.

23 Q. This is the, this is the physical.

24 A. Oh.

25 Q. We're talking about drug testing.

1 A. All right. Let's see, 2014 physical.

2 Q. According to my notes, when I was here with Detective Bender,
3 we just had that green -- you had the alcohol test, the original,
4 with the tape on it.

5 A. Right.

6 Q. And then you had your CCF, but we -- it looks like this but
7 it's green. It was the original. There it is. This is the only
8 -- there you go. So you had one original, and then we were
9 missing the tests.

10 MS. CARSON: Let's just go one page at a time here.

11 MS. WILLIAMS: So, that's the regulation DOT and BAT. So --
12 this is for him.

13 BY MR. FOX:

14 Q. And then that's when we called Concentra and asked for his
15 test.

16 A. Um-hum.

17 Q. And then I got the drug testing results from them, the fax,
18 and it had --

19 MS. CARSON: So we have those two, which both appear to be
20 original.

21 MS. WILLIAMS: Right. But, see, it says --

22 MR. FOX: Seven pages.

23 MS. WILLIAMS: -- DOT with regulation drug test and BAT.
24 See? It's the receipt, the physical with the drug test and BAT.

25 MR. FOX: Okay.

1 MS. CARSON: And here's the alcohol test. We have two
2 copies.

3 BY MR. FOX:

4 Q. But what we're looking for is what's called --

5 A. Is the result.

6 Q. -- the MRO report that says that he was tested for the five
7 panel drugs, and it has a signature at the bottom. It says the
8 doctor's name, and it says I verify the test, and it was negative
9 or positive.

10 A. Right. Correct.

11 Q. And so --

12 A. I know he took it because I know they charged me for it.

13 Q. I know, but again --

14 A. But I don't see --

15 Q. -- like I said, you know, according to --

16 A. -- paperwork for it.

17 Q. -- according to my notes, that's what I had. And I did have
18 the alcohol test, which you have in front of you.

19 A. DOT card. I got the card, the chain of custody.

20 MS. CARSON: That's the chain of custody. That's the custody
21 control form, but that's not the results.

22 MR. FOX: Yeah, that's just the CCF. Yeah --

23 MS. CARSON: It's the chain. It's the chain.

24 MR. FOX: The CCF is what they go down and --

25 MS. CARSON: Yeah, it's just some other copy.

1 MS. WILLIAMS: I have to agree with you, that's all I see.

2 MR. FOX: Yeah.

3 MS. CARSON: Right. So we're just trying to confirm what is
4 and what is not in here right now. That's a physical. That's a
5 physical. These are the ones that came in from Concentra.

6 MR. FOX: Right, and that's the same copy. So that's why we
7 called and got those.

8 MS. WILLIAMS: Right, because we didn't --

9 MS. CARSON: Yep, just confirming that --

10 MR. FOX: Right, that they didn't get it.

11 MS. CARSON: Something didn't get --

12 BY MR. FOX:

13 Q. So is that something that the city keeps from you? They just
14 hang on to it and don't give it to you?

15 A. That part of it I can't answer. When we don't get it -- I'm
16 just following what I believe is the protocol. I didn't know it
17 enough. I didn't --

18 Q. Okay. You want to get a copy, you know, when you do the drug
19 test.

20 A. Make sure.

21 Q. The reason for that is just in case, God forbid, the driver's
22 positive, you would have to stand down the driver immediately, you
23 know, and get him off the road.

24 A. Here's a question. If they give me the DOT card that you see
25 here --

1 Q. The DOT card is not --

2 A. Because he doesn't usually give it to him if he didn't pass.

3 Q. Correct. And just so you know, just as an educational
4 point --

5 A. Okay.

6 Q. -- a physical, the doctor or physician's assistant or even
7 chiropractor under DOT regulations will go in, they're going to
8 examine the driver, and they're going to do a pee test. That is
9 correct, but it's for sugar. It's not for the five-panel test.
10 It's not a -- this -- under this regulation, what you see here, is
11 a whole series of very specific steps. You have to go into a
12 special lab.

13 A. Right.

14 Q. The water is blue. They may or may not observe. It's
15 sealed.

16 A. Right.

17 Q. The driver signs his name.

18 A. Right.

19 Q. It's -- there's a chain of custody. That's what this form is
20 representing --

21 A. Right.

22 Q. -- because it goes from one person to the other and it goes
23 all the way to a lab. It's verified by a doctor. This is a
24 whole, very specific set of regulation and procedure under the
25 control form. This is not. This is -- the driver may do it in a

1 Dixie cup and just hand it to the nurse, and they're just going to
2 check for diabetes or, you know, something like that.

3 A. Okay.

4 Q. It doesn't do the five-panel test.

5 A. Right. But this one does?

6 Q. Yes, ma'am. So just for the record, you will want to make
7 sure you get -- anytime you send a driver and you get one of
8 these, you need to get the verified MRO report behind it.

9 A. Okay.

10 Q. Okay? So when Mr. Chappell was hired, who interviewed him?

11 A. I did.

12 Q. You did. Okay. And can you recall the interview with the
13 driver? Did you, did you go through his application? Did you go
14 through his paperwork?

15 A. Yes, went through the application, took him on a -- had him
16 taken out on a driving test.

17 Q. You took him for a road test?

18 A. I didn't. Aminu did.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. He took him out for the road test and reported back to me,
21 you know, what he thought about him, the driver.

22 Q. The pretest, right?

23 A. Um-hum.

24 Q. And then --

25 A. And then we'll go through and see where he worked, the

1 trucking companies, City Wide, Main [sic] Freight. The only thing
2 I concerned myself with was -- is City Wide because that's the
3 school bus part of it. And check with them and they say he's a
4 good driver. They say yeah, send the information to the city, and
5 they say he's okay. I'm good.

6 Q. So did you call any of his previous employers?

7 A. Only City Wide. I only called there to verify that he was
8 certified and worked with them. They said yeah.

9 Q. Did you document that verification?

10 A. No.

11 Q. You didn't write it down anywhere, make any kind of form?

12 A. I had a form, but I had made a call to them, which is what I
13 normally do to make sure that the person is certified.

14 Q. Yeah. See, there is, there is a -- this is federal form
15 that's normally for interstate drivers. You probably got this
16 from J.J. Keller, I would guess.

17 A. Right.

18 Q. That's what this --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. This is a standard. So in the DOT world, this is very
21 common. You would send it to the previous employer and say, hey,
22 can you let me know about the driver's accident history and his
23 background. Maybe he stole from the company. Any kind of
24 information like that is very valuable, especially in your world
25 of hauling pupils.

1 And then also, you have to check to see compliance under 382,
2 which is drug and alcohol. You want to make sure the driver did
3 comply. If he was in a pool, was he driving a regulated vehicle,
4 such as a school bus or a tractor trailer, he would be in a drug
5 testing program at that company.

6 A. Okay.

7 Q. And you would verify that.

8 A. Okay.

9 Q. But you are -- well, you are sort of interstate and non-
10 interstate in your operation. You kind of fall out of the
11 regulation so I don't want to misguide you. You have your own set
12 of procedures with the school system, but this is a very -- you
13 can exceed the, you can exceed the city --

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. -- standards and do the federal form. And that would be --

16 A. Acceptable.

17 Q. That would be really helpful.

18 A. Okay.

19 Q. That would've been helpful for you all.

20 A. Okay.

21 Q. So as far as your recollection, you only checked with City
22 Wide.

23 A. Right.

24 Q. Do you remember who you spoke to over there, a lady?

25 A. It was a lady, but I don't know her name, because only thing

1 I'm interested in is the person satisfied and is there any
2 problems that I need to know, his work habit, anything that I need
3 to know about this particular person before -- that's not going to
4 show up on a paper.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. That's, you know, not going to show up. They'll say, Carol,
7 XYZ driver doesn't get up on time. XYZ driver, whatever. Those
8 are things that are not going to be in a written thing, but
9 they'll tell me.

10 Q. Right.

11 A. They'll tell me that. So I'll ask them, but if they say this
12 is a good driver, then I submit the information. Then -- to the
13 city. Is he still certified? Is everything in place? They say
14 yes, I add him to the roster. And at this point we had just, you
15 know, learned about all of this other stuff. We may not have had
16 everything all together.

17 Q. I see. And again, you didn't contact Triangle Trucking or
18 Marine Freight. You didn't call any of those folks?

19 A. No. This is a question. Should you call them if you're just
20 -- if they're not in the arena that you're operating in?

21 Q. Uh-huh. I mean, I would. By procedure you would -- you
22 know, under the federal regulations you can go back as far as 10
23 years and contact every one of those, and that's in the trucking
24 world or in the interstate world. Like Greyhound, those are the
25 procedures they do. They will call all of those previous

1 employers. And sometimes they have a service that'll do it for
2 them, and they'll verify -- it'll verify, you know, his length of
3 employment and the reason for that person's dismissal.

4 It may not -- it may -- now, here's -- for example, you want
5 to keep up with the driver's accident history. There may not be
6 an accident on the driver's driving record, but the driver may
7 have wrecked a bus out here in your yard.

8 A. Right.

9 Q. Couple of times. And you might say, you know, you've wrecked
10 two buses, I can't keep you on the books.

11 A. Right.

12 Q. You got to go.

13 A. Hence the reason I call.

14 Q. Right. So that's why -- but, you know, he may -- or I'm just
15 saying, this potential new driver may have done that at a trucking
16 company also. So, you know --

17 A. Okay. I got you.

18 Q. -- a stinky driver is a stinky driver. You would want to --

19 A. Yes, indeed.

20 Q. You know what I mean? Or even in their car, they may have
21 speeding habits or things of that nature.

22 A. Okay.

23 Q. So a thorough background check on your drivers is encouraged
24 under the federal standard. And like I said, you know, as a bus
25 entity, you kind of fall in and out of the regulation. So I don't

1 want to give you misinformation. I'm just going off of the
2 federal standard. And that is to do a background -- character
3 background check and an accident background check and an inquiry
4 into the compliance with drug and alcohol testing. And you
5 already have the form. You don't have to invent anything.

6 A. Right.

7 Q. All you have to do is mail or fax this form right here.

8 A. Okay.

9 Q. It's already done for you. All you got to do is go --

10 A. Okay.

11 Q. -- if you want. I'm not going to -- you know --

12 A. I understand.

13 Q. -- give you bad information, but that would be something that
14 I would encourage you to explore.

15 A. Okay. Okay.

16 Q. When you hired the driver, did you review the driver's
17 driving history?

18 A. From his driving record, yes.

19 Q. And let's take a look at that right now.

20 A. Let's see, his driving record. Okay. This is the driving
21 record. Where are you seeing a number?

22 MS. CARSON: So we got double pages, so we might have two
23 copies of it --

24 (Whispered conversation.)

25 BY MR. FOX:

1 Q. If the driver was originally hired in 2014, correct?

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 Eight, 9, 10, 11.

4 MS. CARSON: I don't know what page that is.

5 MS. WILLIAMS: Eight.

6 MS. CARSON: Okay.

7 MS. WILLIAMS: That's how I do it. So I have 8, 9, 10, 11,

8 12.

9 MS. CARSON: Okay. And then the copies -- these look like it
10 came first.

11 BY MR. FOX:

12 Q. It was like this.

13 A. Yes, sir. It was.

14 MS. CARSON: These have the same numbers on top. So I think
15 these are duplicates of those pages.

16 MS. WILLIAMS: You need it?

17 BY MR. FOX:

18 Q. No, I don't need it. I'm just going to ask you --

19 A. Yes, sir.

20 Q. -- so when you hired this driver, when you hired

21 Mr. Chappell, you did review his driving record --

22 A. Yes, sir.

23 Q. -- correct? Did anything stand out when you reviewed his
24 driving record?

25 A. Just that he had a lot of suspensions.

1 Q. Okay. And did you, did you question him about that, or did
2 you do any further investigation about his suspensions?

3 A. Well, no, because most of them said they were failure to
4 comply and suspension withdrawn. Almost every last one of them
5 had the suspension withdrawn.

6 Q. So you did take note of the suspensions and you just --

7 A. Yeah, because it was so many, and usually that means a child
8 -- in this -- in our industry, as you know, there's usually a
9 child support, usually a child support issue.

10 Q. Not always.

11 A. Right. Right. So it's not unusual for me to see -- I guess
12 that's what I'm trying to say. It's not unusual for me to see
13 suspension withdrawn, suspension withdrawn, suspension withdrawn.

14 Q. Now he did have a suspension where he was suspended for 90
15 days, I believe, in 2015?

16 A. He was suspended by MVA?

17 Q. Correct.

18 A. I didn't know that.

19 Q. Is this the only driving record that you have on the driver?

20 A. This would be the first one that I had gotten. Then I would
21 have gotten another --

22 Q. The first one. Did you pull a second one?

23 A. Then I would have gotten another one the next year, 2014.

24 And this would be the 2015 one. Here you go, page 1 of 3, page 2
25 of 3, page 3 of 3.

1 Q. Uh-huh. He has a suspension right here, 8/12 of '13,
2 restored 10/22/13.

3 A. I didn't have him in '13.

4 Q. Right. And there was also another one, though --

5 A. I didn't even know him.

6 Q. -- in '15. Let me go see my --

7 A. On the one that I had, this is not one on the one that I had.

8 Q. And is it normal to pull the driving record each year?

9 A. I do it myself.

10 Q. And then you review it with the driver?

11 A. Right.

12 Q. Do you document that?

13 A. Yes. I pull it myself and go through it at the beginning of
14 the year. So we reviewed it in September.

15 Q. Okay. I could be wrong, but I believe it was issued in 2015.
16 I have to check my, check my records again here.

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. It may not be in yours. It may in another --

19 A. Okay.

20 Q. -- another file.

21 A. Okay, somebody else's.

22 Q. And that's why I wanted to check to see what you had in
23 yours.

24 A. Yes, sir. Well, do you need it?

25 Q. No, I don't want -- I have enough, I have enough paperwork.

1 A. I hear you. I hear you. Okay. I'm sorry.

2 Q. I don't want to --

3 A. I'm sorry.

4 Q. Yeah, put this back over here in your pile so I don't get
5 that one -- so, according to your records, you never saw a -- any
6 suspensions while he was in your employ?

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. And let's review again the dates of his employment off of
9 your jacket. I think it's on the front of that folder that you
10 have.

11 A. May 5th.

12 Q. May 5th, 2014 --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- is his first hire date?

15 A. Right. He came before then, but we didn't hire him until
16 then. So that's why you see the February one.

17 Q. Right. That's when he filled out his application.

18 A. Correct. And we didn't have a spot for him until May.

19 Q. May. And what was the date of the drug test? Was it --

20 A. The drug test was when he first came.

21 Q. First came in May.

22 A. No, February.

23 Q. No, February.

24 A. In February.

25 Q. So he wasn't drug tested in May again?

1 A. Right. Right.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. Let's see what happened with this.

4 Q. When did the driver leave you?

5 A. The first time? It would've been April 4th -- or I believe
6 it's the 18th, I believe it was.

7 Q. April 4th of what year?

8 A. 2015. And then we got him again in August. Am I getting my
9 numbers right? April 4, 2016.

10 Q. Was his rehire?

11 A. Uh-huh. And then he came back August 2016.

12 Q. I'm getting confused. He was first hired -- let me look back
13 here on my notes because I have it. According to our original
14 interview --

15 A. Um-hum. Correct.

16 Q. -- he was hired 5/5 of 2014.

17 A. Correct.

18 Q. He resigned 4/4 of 2016.

19 A. He never resigned. He just didn't come back.

20 Q. He didn't come back.

21 A. Right.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. He didn't come back, so --

24 Q. So did you terminate him?

25 A. We didn't terminate him.

1 Q. So you thought he was still employed here?

2 A. We still had him on the list. Again, remember this is -- you
3 know, it's close to the, you know, summertime, so we just -- we
4 did not fire him at all. We actually thought he was coming back,
5 to be honest.

6 Q. He just left?

7 A. He didn't come back.

8 Q. Wait a minute. Do you have a -- well, do you have a policy
9 if they leave so many days, if he doesn't come back?

10 A. In this case, no, because it's too -- remember, we're
11 finished in June.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. So he --

14 Q. But the school year is still in operation in April.

15 A. So, then we got another driver to just do his run because
16 he's not -- he only has one student, so he -- his issue is this
17 one student.

18 Q. He's only driving one student?

19 A. That's why. Because he has a charter school.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. So his charter school --

22 Q. During this route?

23 A. During that route, so his charter school is taking their
24 spring break then.

25 Q. Okay.

1 A. So they're going to be out, for his school, for about 3 weeks
2 because that's when they take their spring break, and then
3 everybody else came on afterwards.

4 Q. All right.

5 A. So this is not out of the ordinary. We're going into spring
6 break.

7 Q. All right.

8 A. When everybody comes back from spring break, he didn't come
9 back. But it wasn't that I didn't call him, but he didn't answer
10 the phone. His phone wasn't on. We couldn't reach him.

11 Q. All right. So then --

12 A. So then, we now go into the next month, which is June and
13 school was out, so we didn't --

14 Q. But he's not here for duty. He hasn't reported to work.

15 A. Correct. He hasn't reported for work. Correct.

16 Q. So, I mean, do you have a company policy about drivers not
17 reporting to work?

18 A. Yeah, we do.

19 Q. So, I mean, did you, did you send him a notice saying if you
20 don't come in, you're going to be fired?

21 A. No, we just tried to continue on with another person and keep
22 on moving.

23 Q. You never heard from the driver?

24 A. We didn't speak to him. We tried.

25 Q. Tried to reach him.

1 A. Tried to reach him, but we couldn't.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. So we just had -- we just moved drivers around --

4 Q. I understand.

5 A. -- and just made it work.

6 Q. But in the meantime, he's missing from work?

7 A. He's missing from work.

8 Q. All right. AWOL as they say in the Army.

9 A. AWOL as they say in the Army.

10 Q. All right. So you didn't see him until you rehired him in
11 August?

12 A. In August. Well, we didn't see most of them. Remember,
13 we're not in school.

14 Q. I know, but I'm still on the he didn't show up for work back
15 in May.

16 A. During the spring break.

17 Q. After the spring break.

18 A. His spring break for his school is just beginning.

19 Q. Well, you said, if I remember it, you said April is the start
20 of his spring break, so he would've had to return the last week in
21 April or the 1st of May --

22 A. 1st of May.

23 Q. -- to return back to duty.

24 A. That would be a properly -- that would be a proper way of
25 saying it.

1 Q. Right. And he didn't show up.

2 A. Right.

3 Q. Okay. So now he comes back in the door for --

4 A. No. I called him. He didn't come in. I called him --

5 Q. Right.

6 A. -- to see. But I only called him because I had two drivers
7 the very first week of school, August. So now it's time for us to
8 go to your house and say, we need to pick Jimmy up. We're
9 introducing ourselves. You'll be riding 1876, blah, blah, blah,
10 blah, blah. This is our information. This is our card, introduce
11 ourselves. And the person scheduled to do it walks in and quits.
12 Then I guess, what, about the same time then Theresa gives us a
13 call and says, oh, I just got hired by MTA. That puts me now on a
14 tangent, let me see who can I find to fill this position.

15 So I called everybody, not just him, any and everybody who I
16 would know would have been certified. Because at that point
17 everybody's going to different companies so you don't know who's
18 gone where. So you're calling to see if so and so can work. Can
19 this person work? Can that -- whatever you can come up with so
20 that you can do what you're supposed to do.

21 Q. All right. So at what point did Mr. Chappell return back to
22 work?

23 A. So then he came in on the 19th --

24 Q. Was that by a phone call, or he just came in on his own?

25 A. No, phone call. No, he didn't come in on his own at all.

1 Q. He finally did answer one of the phone calls that you made to
2 him?

3 A. Right.

4 Q. Because you had been calling him.

5 A. We had been calling him.

6 Q. You had been calling him --

7 A. But not in the summertime, we didn't. We'd already gotten
8 somebody to replace him. So once we got somebody to replace him,
9 it's no need to continue.

10 Q. So when the school year started up again for the fall of this
11 year --

12 A. Correct.

13 Q. -- that's when you called him again and said, hey, can you
14 come --

15 A. Are you able -- um-hum.

16 Q. Can you come in?

17 A. Right.

18 Q. And then he reported back to work?

19 A. Right.

20 Q. On the 18th?

21 A. Yes, sir.

22 Q. And then at that point, did you have him fill out a new
23 application and paperwork?

24 A. No, sir. I didn't.

25 Q. All you did was just annotate it on your folder --

1 A. Yes, sir.

2 Q. -- as I can recall, right?

3 A. Yes, sir.

4 Q. So you didn't do any background check, no --

5 A. No, sir. I didn't.

6 Q. -- pre-employment drug test. Because he hadn't been working
7 since April, so you're talking 4 months --

8 A. Right.

9 Q. -- over 4 months --

10 A. Right, sir.

11 Q. -- 4 months and 2 weeks would be exact --

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. -- that he left and then came back to your employ.

14 A. Yes, sir.

15 Q. And there was no additional new paperwork?

16 A. Just that we call into the city to see if he's still
17 certified, and we send in the little thing to see if he's still
18 certified. Yes, he's still certified. Send in the information.
19 Okay. We want to add him back on, because he was on our roster
20 and we had to take him off to replace and put a new person on
21 there. And then, when we add him back -- because drivers switch,
22 I guess, I'm sure you found out. You just add them back on, and
23 if they say everything is in order, we then -- we add them back.
24 If there's a problem, then they say no.

25 Q. Okay. Did -- when he returned, did you, did you talk to him

1 or interview him at all?

2 A. Yeah, he was standing right here. Um-hum.

3 Q. All right. And then did you say, you know, where have you
4 been?

5 A. Right.

6 Q. And what did he say?

7 A. And what was the problem. And he said, I just needed to take
8 care of my family. I couldn't take care of my family with just 1
9 hour of work. And I said, well, no, that's not the way it is. We
10 would pay you a minimum. Had you just said something to me or
11 Tracey, we could've cleared this up. He said, well, I just
12 thought you all was just going to pay me just for the 1 hour.
13 Mr. Chappell, why would we just pay you for 1 hour? Why didn't
14 you just ask us?

15 Q. Um-hum.

16 A. So I said to him, well, if you're interested, we have a
17 driver spot back where you were and I will give you a guarantee
18 time, so that way -- because we know that this school is going to
19 do this every year, so that you know that you're not going to get
20 less money because you only got one student or two students.

21 Q. Right.

22 A. So, in his mind, my understanding was that he didn't come
23 back in because he did not have enough hours to live off of. He
24 just thought he was just going to get that 1 hour in the morning
25 and the one in the afternoon.

1 Q. Okay. And so did he say where he had been?

2 A. No. He just said that he had been -- you know, he does
3 things. He does home improvement, just doing his home improvement
4 stuff.

5 Q. Okay. So, again, for the record, you didn't have him fill
6 out a new application --

7 A. No, I didn't.

8 Q. -- didn't go through any of that driver qualification process
9 like you had --

10 A. Right.

11 Q. -- and just said, okay -- you know, he gives you this
12 explanation --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- and that was fine. And then you said, we'll go ahead and
15 put you back out on this new route.

16 A. Well, I called, I called Baltimore City to make sure that
17 there's no problems.

18 Q. Right.

19 A. Make sure he's still certified, you know, and then make sure
20 he still had -- you know, because everybody took their DOTs in
21 June, so everybody had one. Everybody has to take one for the
22 whole city --

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. -- in June. So when I checked with them, he already had it.
25 It was already -- everything was still in place.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. So he basically came right back, got him back on the same
3 bus, did the same kids that he just --

4 Q. Did before.

5 A. -- did before.

6 Q. All right.

7 A. That's how I viewed it.

8 Q. Okay. All right. Switching gears here, did you purchase any
9 routes from CT or C&T Transportation?

10 A. Never heard of them. Who's CT?

11 Q. CT Transportation.

12 A. I've never heard of them.

13 Q. There's no -- let me check back on my notes. You never heard
14 of them?

15 A. Not -- uh-uh. I've seen -- I may have seen their buses
16 around, but I don't know them or -- the answer is no.

17 Q. I'll just go back here and double check the notes here for a
18 second.

19 A. All of my routes came from the city. I didn't know you could
20 do that.

21 Q. Well, according to your statement in 2009 it says you bought
22 Classic Transportation Company with five or six buses.

23 A. But that's a bus. Those are buses. That's not a route. But
24 your question --

25 Q. Right. That's Classic --

1 A. -- was did I get --

2 Q. Did you get --

3 A. But Classic is not C&T.

4 Q. It's not?

5 A. No.

6 Q. It's a different company? Okay.

7 A. No.

8 Q. All right. That's what I need to find out. Are they still
9 in business, Classic Transportation?

10 A. No. That's why we bought their buses.

11 Q. And it was Classic Transportation. And who did you purchase
12 them from?

13 A. Perkins.

14 What was Perkins --

15 MS. STEPHENSON: Tina Swain (ph.).

16 MS. WILLIAMS: Well, Tina Swain.

17 BY MR. FOX:

18 Q. When we get a minute, I don't know if you have a purchase
19 order or anything from -- who is it, Tina?

20 A. Tina Swain.

21 Q. Swain?

22 MS. STEPHENSON: They weren't in Baltimore City. They were
23 Baltimore County.

24 MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah. You know that's not Baltimore City,
25 right? That's not a Baltimore City --

1 BY MR. FOX:

2 Q. I have no idea. All I know is their name is on paperwork,
3 and I'm just trying to figure them out.

4 A. Yeah. C&T is the city. Classic was Baltimore County.

5 Q. Okay. Classic Transportation is -- say again -- Baltimore?

6 A. Tina Swain.

7 Q. No, no, no. You said that they are -- Classic Transportation
8 drives for who?

9 A. Was doing, was doing Baltimore County --

10 Q. Was doing Baltimore County.

11 A. -- when we purchased those buses in August of 2009.

12 Q. Okay. And you purchased them from Tina Swain?

13 A. The buses. Correct.

14 Q. And is that the owner or --

15 A. Yes, at the time, yes.

16 Q. And you said Classic Transportation is not in business
17 anymore?

18 A. Right.

19 Q. Okay. That was my mistake because I saw CT and C&T
20 Transportation, and I thought that was Classic Transportation.

21 So, that's just --

22 A. No. That might have been your notes.

23 Q. Yeah. That's no problem. That's why we're doing this, is
24 just to get clarification. How far back does your payroll system
25 go?

1 A. ADT -- ADP, ADP. Tracey takes care of that.

2 Q. She can check it?

3 A. Um-hum.

4 Q. Okay. How far back -- he wants to know how far --

5 MS. CARSON: Let's answer this question first that you went
6 out there for. Would you go back for the purchase order for the
7 buses from Classic?

8 MS. STEPHENSON: This is the --

9 MS. CARSON: Okay.

10 MS. STEPHENSON: Yeah, purchase orders.

11 BY MR. FOX:

12 Q. All right. If you can just make a copy, that'll be great.

13 And for the record did Mr. Chappell ever work prior to the dates
14 on your application system?

15 A. Did he work?

16 Q. Was he employed by AAA prior to 2014?

17 A. No.

18 Q. That was his original hire date, correct?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Did Mr. Chappell ever have any accidents or incidents while
21 he was employed here at the company?

22 A. He had an incident where he knocked a mirror off the side of
23 a car.

24 Q. Um-hum.

25 A. And he had an incident where --

1 Q. What was the date of the first one?

2 A. 9/24/15.

3 Q. You have a, you have a accident folder on that? 9/24/15?

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. And he -- and what happened at that?

6 A. He had no student on the bus, and the accident, the actual
7 write-up that's in date 9 -- is actually 9/23, 10:10 a.m. was the
8 actual.

9 Q. 9/23 --

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. -- '15?

12 A. Yes, sir.

13 Q. And --

14 A. And here is the actual --

15 Q. We have a lot of paper here. Let me fold this up here for
16 just a second, and let's just talk about this one.

17 A. All right. And this is his post-accident report. And here's
18 what he sent to the city.

19 MS. CARSON: Did this come with that? Let's not mix it up
20 with his --

21 MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah that's, yeah --

22 MS. CARSON: -- qualifications pile. Hold on.

23 MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah. No, no, no --

24 MS. CARSON: I'm going to take this out of here.

25 (Crosstalk.)

1 MS. WILLIAMS: It wasn't no students on --

2 MR. FOX: That goes with this one.

3 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

4 MS. CARSON: I just didn't want to get all your papers in the
5 wrong --

6 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

7 MS. CARSON: -- place.

8 MS. CARSON: I'll try. Well, they keep saying we're going to
9 a paperless world. I don't believe it.

10 MR. FOX: Yeah, not in this industry, unfortunately. It's --

11 MS. CARSON: There's that.

12 MR. FOX: -- pretty paper intensive.

13 BY MR. FOX:

14 Q. So he had a accident on 9/24?

15 A. Yes, sir.

16 Q. Or 9/23. Correction.

17 A. Yes, sir.

18 Q. And he was driving 1876?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. So he was driving the same --

21 A. Same bus.

22 Q. -- accident vehicle.

23 A. He'd been -- exactly.

24 Q. And can you recall what happened from this?

25 A. It's written. He wrote it.

- 1 Q. Okay. The mirror -- he hit a mirror.
- 2 A. Yes, sir.
- 3 Q. And --
- 4 A. That's where we sent it over to the city.
- 5 Q. And then what's your procedure for an accident?
- 6 A. He had to do a post -- he had to get a post-accident.
- 7 Q. Can you just explain for the record what is your procedure
- 8 for the -- if a driver sustains an accident, what is the procedure
- 9 between you and the city?
- 10 A. I send him for a post-accident and --
- 11 Q. Post-accident drug test?
- 12 A. Drug test.
- 13 Q. Okay.
- 14 A. Uh-huh. Do you need it?
- 15 Q. No.
- 16 A. And then I send the record over to the Baltimore City Public
- 17 School System and explaining that -- this particular accident and
- 18 whatever happened. And he'll sign it, and we send it over.
- 19 Q. Okay. And were there any injuries on the bus?
- 20 A. There were no -- none. Uh-huh.
- 21 Q. What --
- 22 A. There were no children.
- 23 Q. What did the police -- was there a police report with this?
- 24 A. No police report when there's no children, and it's a mirror.
- 25 Q. No children. Was there any -- what was the extent of the

1 damage? Do you know?

2 A. A mirror.

3 Q. And you have the photos, I think.

4 A. Yes. You need them?

5 Q. Yes. Did he have any other accidents or incidents while he
6 was employed here?

7 A. He had one incident that was witnessed by dispatch, and
8 dispatch kind of saw him kind of get up and then sit down and he
9 said, "You okay, Mr. Chappell?" He said, yeah. Then he said,
10 okay, well, I think we're going to call 911 just to make sure
11 you're okay. And so, he did, and they came.

12 Q. When was this?

13 A. This had to be 20- -- what was the date?

14 MS. STEPHENSON: 24th.

15 MS. WILLIAMS: 24th of --

16 MS. STEPHENSON: October.

17 MS. WILLIAMS: -- October.

18 BY MR. FOX:

19 Q. So that was the Friday that I questioned you about on his
20 payroll?

21 A. That is exactly what.

22 Q. And then you said he went on a funeral leave?

23 A. That I said?

24 Q. Yeah.

25 A. There was a funeral leave.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. And then we went on break, and I went to go check it. And
3 Tracey said, Carol, I think you've got the dates wrong. So, we
4 went to the -- look to see, and sure enough, I had it wrong.

5 But the only thing I had knowledge of was a conversation he
6 and I had about him not coming in because of a funeral that he had
7 just gone to for his other brother. And he was saying that his
8 second brother had died, so it stuck out, stuck out to me because
9 it was weird that two brothers, like really short period span of
10 time that he was going again to another person's funeral.

11 Q. Um-hum.

12 A. And then when he had the little episode and then Mr. Dent
13 said he had the, you know, what's the name people to come, then --

14 Q. What people?

15 A. The EMTs.

16 Q. Ambulance?

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. So an ambulance was dispatched to here to the --

19 A. Dispatched here, um-hum.

20 Q. -- to the, to the office.

21 A. Correct.

22 Q. He fainted or passed out or --

23 A. He didn't faint. He didn't -- Mr. Dent said he stood up, and
24 he kind of sat back down in the chair. And he said to him it
25 didn't look right, so Mr. Chappell -- he said, "Mr. Chappell, why

1 don't you just go and sit down and we'll call 911." So 911 came
2 and they checked him out, said he looks okay.

3 Q. Um-hum.

4 A. And we said, Mr. Chappell --

5 Q. Were you here for this?

6 A. No. So I'm only -- that's why I got my dates wrong because I
7 was --

8 Q. You didn't witness this event?

9 A. Not at all.

10 Q. Who -- is there -- is the dispatcher here?

11 A. Yes, sir.

12 Q. Can he come in, and I want to interview him right now?

13 A. Yes, sir.

14 MS. STEPHENSON: He's at dialysis.

15 MS. WILLIAMS: Oh, he's at dialysis.

16 BY MR. FOX:

17 Q. Oh. Is he going to be here later?

18 A. Once he gets out of dialysis.

19 Q. So he'll be here this morning?

20 A. No. Dialysis takes a little longer. What time --

21 MS. STEPHENSON: It's usually like a 4 --

22 MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah, 4 hour.

23 MS. STEPHENSON: -- hour session.

24 BY MR. FOX:

25 Q. Oh, wow. Okay. Maybe I'll catch him tomorrow.

1 A. Okay.

2 Q. If he's not -- so he won't be in until approximately what
3 time? Do you know?

4 A. Around 4.

5 Q. Four?

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. I won't be here at 4.

8 MS. STEPHENSON: He comes in and goes, but -- yeah.

9 BY MR. FOX:

10 Q. And I know this sounds -- this may sound odd, but I have to
11 ask. The driver never was in your employ in 2011; is that
12 correct?

13 A. No, sir.

14 Q. He started in 2014?

15 A. Correct.

16 Q. Okay. All right.

17 A. Maybe that's that C&T that you were asking about.

18 MS. CARSON: Just answer his question, which is did he work
19 here in 2011.

20 MS. WILLIAMS: No, he didn't work for us.

21 BY MR. FOX:

22 Q. And who is the gentleman that was here, your dispatcher?

23 A. Dispatcher, Mr. Robert Dent.

24 Q. Mr. Robert?

25 A. Yes, sir. Um-hum.

1 Q. That's his name, Mr. Robert?

2 A. Yes, sir.

3 MS. CARSON: Dent.

4 MS. WILLIAMS: Dent.

5 BY MR. FOX:

6 Q. Dent. Okay. He's the dispatcher.

7 A. Um-hum.

8 Q. Okay. I met him when I was --

9 A. Correct.

10 Q. -- last here.

11 A. Right.

12 Q. Okay. I'll catch up with him tomorrow, I guess, maybe.

13 A. Okay.

14 Q. I'm going to be in the area tomorrow. I'll see if I can stop
15 in.

16 A. Okay.

17 Q. And he -- again, the ambulance came or EMT came, and the
18 driver refused treatment. Is that what your understanding of that
19 event was?

20 A. They said --

21 What did you hear, because --

22 MR. FOX: Were you here, Tracey?

23 MS. STEPHENSON: No.

24 MR. FOX: Okay.

25 MS. STEPHENSON: I remember them saying that he didn't need

1 -- he say he didn't need it, and he was okay. They came here. I
2 understand that he walked out. They said, well, come downstairs,
3 we'll just walk -- we'll check you out. So I understand he walked
4 downstairs with them, and that's all I know.

5 (Crosstalk.)

6 MS. WILLIAMS: Yeah, they didn't give us no paper that says
7 he refused anything, which is -- which they normally do.

8 MS. STEPHENSON: They checked, and they said, well, walk on
9 down. He walked on down the stairs with them.

10 MR. FOX: Okay. And did either of you interview him after
11 this event?

12 MS. WILLIAMS: We sent him --

13 MS. STEPHENSON: I spoke with him about -- maybe around
14 12-ish. He came back because Mr. Dent had asked him, you know,
15 make sure everything okay. He already missed his --
16 (indiscernible) said take the day off. He said go check with your
17 doctor to make sure everything is okay. And he came back, and he
18 said that he had gone to the doctor and he had an allergic
19 reaction to some food that he had eaten.

20 MR. FOX: Uh-huh.

21 MS. STEPHENSON: He said something like -- he had some
22 mustard or something in some food, and he had an allergic reaction
23 to some mustard on his food.

24 MR. FOX: So, well, again this is hearsay, but your
25 understanding is that the dispatcher told him to go to see his

1 doctor?

2 MS. STEPHENSON: Well, he came -- as best as I can possibly
3 recollect, he told him, are you okay? He says yes, everything was
4 fine. And I believe --

5 MR. FOX: Why don't we ask the dispatcher since he was --

6 MS. STEPHENSON: Yeah, because I'm trying to go by hearsay.
7 It's best to ask him. I'm not --

8 MR. FOX: Yeah, so we'll ask, we'll ask the dispatcher.

9 But as far as the company's position when the driver had that
10 event -- or is it company policy if the driver has a medical
11 event, is there a procedure that you do to have the driver go see
12 his doctor and bring back a note?

13 MS. WILLIAMS: We didn't know that he had a medical event.
14 Just something --

15 MR. FOX: The dispatcher never reported this to you?

16 MS. WILLIAMS: Dispatch -- yeah, he did. He says -- but we
17 have one person saying something is wrong, one person saying
18 there's nothing wrong with me. We have the ambulance people
19 saying we didn't see anything wrong with him. So he goes and said
20 a reaction to something he ate.

21 That's not unusual for any of us to have a reaction to
22 something, so, we can't -- we're not doctors. We don't -- we can
23 go on if we felt like there was something that would've raised our
24 hair, we would've been like, okay, let's try to -- you know, but
25 that's all we know. We can't do any more than ask you get to

1 somebody else to look at you other than us.

2 MR. FOX: Um-hum.

3 MS. WILLIAMS: And see what they medically think. And that's
4 what he did.

5 INTERVIEW OF TRACEY STEPHENSON

6 BY MR. FOX:

7 Q. Okay. But he didn't bring you back a note saying I'm okay
8 from the doctor? He said he went to the doctor. Did he bring
9 back a note saying I'm cleared for duty, I'm okay?

10 A. He said he was bringing it in, and actually he said also he
11 called to have them fax it in, because he said they gave him -- I
12 said, did you get a note from the doctor? He says, do I need to?
13 I can go back and get it.

14 Q. Um-hum.

15 A. I said yes. I said have them fax it over. He said okay. He
16 left back out. He said they will -- they said they would fax it
17 over.

18 Q. Okay.

19 MS. WILLIAMS: But they never did.

20 MR. FOX: So you never received a copy?

21 MS. WILLIAMS: We never received a copy. This is --
22 anything.

23 BY MR. FOX:

24 Q. So did you follow up on that? Did you call the doctor and
25 say where's this note for the, for the release, that the driver's

1 okay to -- he's cleared for duty?

2 A. He didn't give us the doctor's name. I asked him again, I
3 guess about Wednesday or Thursday, because it was -- he came back.
4 On Wednesday I said --

5 Q. Well, we're talking about Friday. Friday's the day.

6 A. No, that's Monday. Actually the days are (indiscernible).
7 The 24th is a Monday.

8 Q. Okay. I'm sorry.

9 MS. WILLIAMS: But I thought it was a Friday.

10 MR. FOX: Okay. The 24th -- excuse me for not knowing that.
11 The 24th was a Monday. Okay.

12 MS. CARSON: Yes.

13 MR. FOX: So -- and that's the day he had his event, and then
14 he came back later that afternoon.

15 MS. STEPHENSON: Right.

16 MR. FOX: And you dispatched him that afternoon?

17 MS. STEPHENSON: No.

18 MS. WILLIAMS: No.

19 MR. FOX: You did not?

20 MS. STEPHENSON: No.

21 MS. WILLIAMS: No.

22 MR. FOX: Right, because that's what the payroll records say,
23 zero.

24 MS. WILLIAMS: Right.

25 MS. STEPHENSON: No, he didn't work at all.

1 MS. WILLIAMS: That's what made, that's what made -- that's
2 what gave you the look, well, why wasn't he here?

3 MR. FOX: Correct.

4 MS. WILLIAMS: Right.

5 BY MR. FOX:

6 Q. So but he returned the next day.

7 A. Right.

8 Q. And then you had questioned him about, hey, where's the
9 doctor's note?

10 A. I asked him on that --

11 Q. Tuesday. We're on Tuesday now.

12 A. -- Monday afternoon. I asked him, I said -- when he came in,
13 I said, well -- that's when he came back and said that he had an
14 allergic reaction to the food he ate. I said, okay, well, we need
15 your doctor to send it over --

16 Q. Right.

17 A. -- to us. He said okay.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And he left back out.

20 Q. Right.

21 A. When he got back in -- came back in on Tuesday, I saw him
22 Tuesday, I guess in the day. And I asked him. I said, did you
23 get the doctor's note because I don't see it. He says they're
24 supposed to fax it over.

25 Q. Right.

1 A. I said okay. So we checked and I said be looking out for a
2 fax from Mr. Chappell's doctor.

3 Q. Right.

4 A. Said okay. And I guess by -- I forget where I was Wednesday,
5 but I remember on Friday looking again saying -- I looked at the
6 fax. I'm like, I don't see this in the fax. And that's when I
7 checked again and asked Mr. Chappell -- was that Friday? Yes, on
8 that Friday. Mr. Chappell, can you have the doctor -- give him my
9 number because I don't have a fax from him? He said, yes, I'll
10 get that to you. He said, he said he would -- the lady in the
11 office said they were sending it over.

12 He verified the fax number. I said, yes, that's the correct
13 fax number. I said just have them to call me if they have
14 trouble. And I remember during that week our phone lines -- we
15 just transferred from Verizon to Comcast, and our phone lines kept
16 going up and down, and the fax was going up and down. So, I said,
17 if they have any trouble have them give me a call, because we were
18 having trouble with the phones not receiving calls and us not
19 receiving faxes because of the phone lines --

20 MS. WILLIAMS: The switch.

21 MS. STEPHENSON: -- were going down. So then we called --
22 because I remember we weren't getting a couple faxes. That's why
23 I thought he sent the fax. So I remember calling and checking
24 with him. I thought they were down the street. We were on
25 Comcast. I said, what's going on with the company? Our lines

1 keep going up and down. They said it's not us. It's the --

2 MS. WILLIAMS: Comcast, the whole side.

3 MS. STEPHENSON: They said the transformer or something went
4 down, and it's not giving our system enough power. So, we're
5 here. He said our system is working but it's not giving us enough
6 power so that our systems can stay up, but we're waiting for
7 Baltimore City to finish working on their electric transformer so
8 ours can stay back up. Because I happened -- I just happened to
9 be going out, and I saw the Comcast truck in the neighborhood.

10 BY MR. FOX:

11 Q. All right. So you requested a fax, or you requested a note
12 from the doctor --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- through the driver --

15 A. Right.

16 Q. -- starting on Tuesday?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. And you never received it the whole entire week?

19 A. Right. And he said -- and I told him to have them fax it. I
20 told him, okay, have them fax it. I said, just call them.

21 Q. Right.

22 A. I said, just have them send it over to me.

23 Q. Sure.

24 A. And because that week I knew we were having so much trouble
25 with our phone lines and with our faxes, and when he said that

1 they said they sent it, I did not think they didn't because --

2 MS. WILLIAMS: We were having problems.

3 MS. STEPHENSON: -- many people said, I've sent faxes. And
4 I, myself, have called the office and the phones -- they wouldn't
5 hear it.

6 BY MR. FOX:

7 Q. Right. Did you call the doctor's office yourself?

8 A. No. I asked him to have them call me because he didn't give
9 me the doctor's name.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. I did not have the doctor's phone number or I would've
12 called.

13 Q. So, again, for the record you asked for a doctor's note, and
14 you never received one the whole entire week?

15 A. Right. He said they said they sent it. He called them. He
16 said the lady in the office said they faxed it over.

17 Q. Right, but you never got a copy?

18 A. But I never saw a copy. That's correct.

19 INTERVIEW OF CAROL WILLIAMS

20 BY MR. FOX:

21 Q. Including into that following Monday when he went out?

22 A. Well, Monday, we was out. I think we were out Monday. We
23 didn't have school on that Monday.

24 Q. Oh, that's -- no, Tuesday --

25 A. Yeah, Tuesday.

1 Q. -- when he went out on the 1st. Am I saying that right?

2 A. Right.

3 Q. Yeah, the 1st.

4 A. Right, um-hum.

5 Q. So you still didn't get the note effective the 1st?

6 A. We didn't. We hadn't seen it.

7 Q. You hadn't seen it.

8 A. We hadn't seen it.

9 MR. FOX: But yet you dispatched him?

10 MS. STEPHENSON: I don't think -- I hadn't seen one -- I
11 hadn't gotten into to work yet on Tuesday, but I remember asking
12 about it on Friday.

13 BY MR. FOX:

14 Q. I still find it odd that when we were asking about that day
15 that he was off that there was all this commotion, you know, with
16 the ambulance coming here and you guys asking about where's there
17 a doctor's note, it would -- you would think it would spark your
18 memory.

19 A. But it wasn't a commotion with me.

20 Q. Right. But Tracey was here.

21 A. But the question was directed to me, and so I spoke on what I
22 knew.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. I did not have that --

25 Q. Sure.

1 A. -- communication. That's why I --

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. -- asked Tracey to speak on it because I spoke out of turn,
4 and I didn't want to do that. This time it was so much going on
5 and so much confusion -- I remember the last thing that I talked
6 to Mr. Chappell about, and it was about him being off again, which
7 bothers me, because he was going to be off again for another
8 funeral. That was odd for me.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Not somebody having a reaction to something they ate.

11 Q. Okay. With the exception of this episode that we're
12 discussing on the 24th, was there any other medical event that
13 Mr. Chappell had --

14 A. Not a one.

15 Q. -- that you witnessed while he was employed here?

16 A. None.

17 Q. No seizures, no fainting spells?

18 A. None.

19 MR. FOX: Tracy?

20 MS. STEPHENSON: Never.

21 MR. FOX: No?

22 MS. WILLIAMS: Not a one.

23 MR. FOX: Okay.

24 MS. STEPHENSON: Never.

25 MR. FOX: Never. And no -- did you -- were you aware of any

1 health issues with Mr. Chappell?

2 MS. STEPHENSON: No.

3 MS. WILLIAMS: Nothing.

4 BY MR. FOX:

5 Q. Now in your records you have a 90-day medical card.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Did that --

8 A. Right. So --

9 Q. Did you inquire about that?

10 A. Well, we had to because he couldn't drive until his DOT was
11 straight, once he got his DOT straight. I mean, we all get that.
12 That's not, that's not abnormal for somebody to get a 30-day -- a
13 90-day.

14 MS. STEPHENSON: But we did inquire about the 90-day, and it
15 was --

16 MR. FOX: And it was what?

17 MS. STEPHENSON: I think it's -- he said, I think his
18 pressure was up.

19 MR. FOX: High blood pressure?

20 MS. WILLIAMS: Um-hum.

21 MS. STEPHENSON: Yeah.

22 BY MR. FOX:

23 Q. And going back to incidents or accidents, according to your
24 records, you only have one for 9/23 and then his incident here
25 where he was not able to be dispatched on the 24th?

1 A. Right.

2 Q. During his employment here, did you ever get any alerts on
3 his background from --

4 A. We don't -- I --

5 Q. -- is it CJIS? Is that the system that does your background
6 checks?

7 A. We don't get that.

8 Q. It goes to the city?

9 A. Goes to the city.

10 Q. Now, don't you have a copy of a background check?

11 A. We only have the original background check when a person
12 first gets employed.

13 Q. Right.

14 A. We only have the original that they had.

15 Q. And when you reviewed it, you didn't see anything abnormal in
16 his background history.

17 A. No, sir. Do you want to see it?

18 Q. I have a copy. Now during his employment here, did you ever
19 contact Howard County to see if he could run routes over there?

20 A. Yes, I did.

21 Q. And what was the result of that?

22 A. They said no.

23 Q. They said no, that he was disqualified?

24 A. No, they just didn't -- they were not going to certify him.

25 Q. He was not certified?

1 A. Right. Well, that's not unusual for Howard County.

2 Q. Okay. Did that spark your interest that he was not qualified
3 in Howard County?

4 A. Not with Howard County. That's not unusual.

5 Q. Why, because they have high standards?

6 A. Well, they may -- they -- maybe I'll use that. Maybe high --
7 maybe that's the word that you want to use, yeah. But they don't,
8 they don't certify everybody.

9 Q. Okay. So they're picky?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. All right. So did you, did you inquire, because I have all
12 the information from Howard County that they were in touch with
13 you and notified you that he was not qualified.

14 A. Right.

15 Q. Did you inquire why he was not qualified there?

16 A. No, I didn't, because when they send me something over it's
17 just something -- no, they're not going to certify him based off
18 of whatever it was that they came up within their rules.

19 Q. Uh-huh.

20 A. I find that the city and the county don't use the same rules,
21 and to me, everybody should be using the same, but they don't. So
22 I don't know who's right, who's wrong, who's overdoing it, who's
23 not, who's using a minimum and going -- I don't know.

24 Q. Do you have drivers that are currently employed here that
25 you've inquired about Howard County possible routes who have been

1 deemed as not qualified there?

2 A. They didn't do them as not qualified. But like I had one,
3 Mr. Dorsey, he had something -- he was at that time 60. And he
4 had something that he had done, I think, when he was 16, and they
5 disqualified him.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. And then I had another lady. We never hired her though.
8 What was her name?

9 MS. CARSON: Well, if she doesn't work here, then it doesn't
10 answer his question.

11 BY MR. FOX:

12 Q. The question is, do you have any drivers --

13 A. Oh, oh, oh.

14 Q. -- that are currently employed that you've inquired to Howard
15 County, I would like to put this driver on Howard County, and came
16 back as not qualified or disqualified?

17 A. Aminu.

18 Q. Aminu?

19 A. Um-hum.

20 Q. Who is this person?

21 A. Aminu.

22 Q. Aminu.

23 A. Um-hum. A-M-I-N-U.

24 Q. Can you spell it for me?

25 A. A-M-I.

1 Q. A-M-I.

2 A. N-U.

3 Q. N-U.

4 A. Um-hum.

5 Q. Is that the first name or last name?

6 A. Last name -- first name. First name Aminu, last name --

7 Q. Oh, her first name is Aminu?

8 A. Um-hum. A-M-I-N-U. You got it.

9 Q. Oh, Aminu is the first name?

10 A. Aminu, uh-huh, and Dabo, D-A-B-O.

11 Q. D-A-B-O. I'm sorry.

12 Well, isn't this your son? Somebody's son? No? I'm sorry.

13 I thought I saw -- isn't that your maiden name? Am I saying that
14 right?

15 MS. STEPHENSON: Yes.

16 MR. FOX: I thought I saw that on paperwork.

17 MS. STEPHENSON: Right.

18 MR. FOX: So that's your maiden name?

19 MS. STEPHENSON: That was my previous name.

20 MR. FOX: Previous name. So this is, this is a relative of
21 the company?

22 MS. STEPHENSON: It's my son's father.

23 BY MR. FOX:

24 Q. Your son's father, okay. All right. So he's -- he -- is he
25 a driver here, then, for the city?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And he came back as being disqualified with the county?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And again, did you ask? Did you make any inquiries over
5 there to the secretary or to Mr. Ramsey concerning why the driver
6 would be disqualified?

7 A. Mr. Ramsey's words was, as I can remember, that anyone who
8 had a -- how do you say that --

9 MS. STEPHENSON: A domestic something.

10 MS. WILLIAMS: -- a domestic something, then they couldn't --
11 right.

12 BY MR. FOX:

13 Q. Okay.

14 A. They couldn't --

15 Q. Did you have that same conversation concerning Mr. Chappell
16 about him being disqualified in Howard County?

17 A. Same -- it was the same thing, something about a domestic
18 thing. When I talked with Mr. Chappell about -- well, I knew
19 about Aminu's, but when I talked to Mr. Chappell about his, he
20 said it was his son, him and his son and something about a house
21 and him and his son have a -- I don't know. It didn't have
22 anything to do with me.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. As long as -- I feel like if you didn't beat your wife up or
25 do something that was child-related or stuff that happens with you

1 and your children, I can't.

2 Q. Okay. Are you knowledgeable about the Federal Motor Carrier
3 safety regulations at all?

4 A. Yeah. He came here and told me.

5 Q. Who's he?

6 A. I would like to --

7 Q. Is that C. Syler (ph.), big tall guy?

8 A. There you go.

9 Q. Bald?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Yeah, C. Syler. Okay. And how about, are you familiar, are
12 you familiar and knowledgeable about the COMAR, the Code of
13 Maryland Regulations?

14 A. I read it. I have it. And I find that many people, as well
15 as myself, need a lawyer to really understand the --

16 Q. Right.

17 A. -- realities of it. And it seems to me some jurisdictions
18 view some things, and some jurisdictions view it another way.
19 That's all I can say about that.

20 Q. Okay. Were you aware that Mr. Chappell's license had been
21 downgraded?

22 A. Not according to the driving record that I have.

23 Q. You never got any notification that his license was about to
24 be downgraded to car license?

25 A. No, sir.

1 Q. Did he -- did Mr. Chappell ever notify the company that he
2 was -- he needed to go to DMV and bring in his new medical card?

3 A. He didn't notify us that, but -- and he didn't tell us, but
4 you know, we -- that's something that they personally are
5 responsible for. So when I go, I got to take mine down.
6 Everybody has to take theirs down.

7 Q. But the company never received any notification that the
8 driver's license was -- it was downgraded?

9 A. No. Even on the day of it wasn't downgraded. Even on the
10 driver record, it was valid.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. It wasn't downgraded until the day after, something was put
13 in there, but it was too late then.

14 Q. All right. I believe that I have answered -- or you have
15 answered all of my questions.

16 MS. CARSON: That's my phone.

17 BY MR. FOX:

18 Q. Is there any --

19 A. Oh, I was thinking that was rain.

20 Q. It is rain, I think.

21 MS. STEPHENSON: Yes.

22 BY MR. FOX:

23 Q. Is there anything that you need or wish to add to the record
24 before I terminate the interview?

25 A. Did they ever find out what happened to him?

1 Q. It's still under investigation.

2 MR. FOX: So at this time we're going to conclude the
3 interview. It is now 11:04 a.m.

4 (Whereupon, at 11:04 a.m., the interview was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: SCHOOL BUS/COMMUTER BUS ACCIDENT
 IN BALTIMORE, MARYLAND ON
 NOVEMBER 1, 2016
 Interview of Carol Williams and
 Tracey Stephenson

DOCKET NUMBER: HWY17MH007

PLACE: Baltimore, Maryland

DATE: November 29, 2016

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.

William Jackson
Transcriber