

National Transportation Safety Board

Washington, D.C. 20594

Office of Railroad, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Investigations

<u>Interview Regarding Investigation PLD20LR001</u>
<u>Enbridge Inc. Natural Gas Pipeline Rupture and Fire in Hillsboro, KY on May 4, 2020</u>

Name: Brys	on Price				
Department:	on Price Enbridge Owingsville Station				
Title: Pipeliv	rer				
Date of Interview:	May 11, 2020				
I have reviewed my transcript(s) from the above referenced accident and:					
	I have no comments to make.				
	My comments are submitted herewith.				
V	My comments are marked on the attached copy.				

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

ENBRIDGE INC. NATURAL GAS *

PIPELINE RUPTURE AND FIRE * Accident No.: PLD20LR001 IN HILLSBORO, KENTUCKY, *

ON MAY 4, 2020

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Interview of: BRYSON PRICE, Pipeliner

Enbridge, Inc.

Via teleconference

Monday, May 11, 2020

APPEARANCES:

ALEXANDRIA COLLETTI, Investigator in Charge National Transportation Safety Board

ALVARO RODRIGUEZ, Accident Investigator Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

THOMAS WOODEN, Vice President Engineering and Asset Management Enbridge, Inc.

DANE JAQUES, Attorney Steptoe and Johnson, LLP

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INTERVIEW

(3:37 p.m.)

MS. COLLETTI: We're on the record for the Bryson Price interview. Good afternoon. Today is May 11th, 2020. It is now 3:37 p.m. Eastern Time. My name is Alex Colletti, and I'm the investigator in charge for this accident for the National Transportation Safety Board in Washington, D.C. We're holding

This interview is being conducted as part of the investigation into the Texas Eastern Transmission natural gas release and fire that occurred on May 4th, 2020, in Fleming County, Kentucky. The NTSB case number for this accident is PLD20LR001.

this interview remotely via audio conference call.

This interview is being recorded and may be transcribed at a later date. A copy of the transcript will be provided to the interviewee for review prior to being entered into the public docket. This is your opportunity to correct things that the transcriber may have incorrectly transcribed; it's not your opportunity to add and elaborate on things. So if you have something that's factual that you'd like to add, during the interview is the best time.

You're permitted to have one other person present during the interview. This person is of your choice: an attorney, spouse, supervisor, friend, family member, or no one at all.

Bryson, for the record, please state the spelling of your

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full name, your job title, and who you have selected to be present during this interview.

MR. PRICE: Bryson Price, B-r-y-s-o-n, Price, P-r-i-c-e, and Dane Jaques, D-a-n-e, J-a-q-u-e-s, will be my representative.

MS. COLLETTI: And, Bryson, what's your job title?

MR. PRICE: Pipeliner. I'm sorry.

MS. COLLETTI: No, that's okay. It's three things at once, which is not my favorite way to do it, but that's how they have us do it. All right, now we're going to go around the call, so to speak, and introduce ourselves. We'll start with Alvaro, then Tom, then Dane.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Hi, this is Alvaro Rodriguez. Alvaro,
A-l-v-a-r-o, Rodriguez, R-o-d-r-i-g-u-e-z. I'm an accident
investigator with the Accident Investigation Division of PHMSA in
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

MR. WOODEN: Hi, this is Thomas Wooden. T-h-o-m-a-s, W-o-o-d-e-n. Vice President of Engineering and Asset Management for Enbridge. Also a party coordinator for the investigation.

MR. JAQUES: My name is Dane Jaques, spelled D-a-n-e, J-a-q-u-e-s, and I'm a partner with the law firm of Steptoe and Johnson.

MS. COLLETTI: Okay, great.

Well, Bryson, thank you for agreeing to interview with us today. I really appreciate your time. It's an important task we have to collect the information we can from your memory of that

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We're going to ask you to provide a lot of details for us, day. as much as you can remember. Please don't speculate; just provide what you can remember.

If I or someone else asks you a question, and you don't remember or you don't know the answer, it's fine to say, I don't know. However, the more detail you can give us, the better.

INTERVIEW OF BRYSON PRICE

BY MS. COLLETTI:

- Before we get started on the rupture itself, can we talk a little bit about your background? Did you start in the pipeline industry working for Texas Eastern or someone else? Did you start as a pipeliner, or did you start in another section? And can you just talk about that for a little while?
- Yes. Actually, I left college and started working here as a summer hand at the Owingsville station. I was hired on as a full Lebanon time pipeliner at the bisben, Ohio, station. Transferred to Compressor Danville, Kentucky, to the pressure station as a pipeliner. And then transferred back home to the Owingsville station as a pipeliner. Then the company, in October of 2012 or '13 -- I'm not for sure 100 percent -- start out as entry level pipeliner, and I worked my way to utility 2 pipeliner title.
- That's great. Thank you. So you've been with the company for quite a while now. I mean, almost a decade. That's great.
- So this is the part where I'm going to ask you to talk for quite a while. I'd like you to start from when you were first

notified of the accident: who told you of the rupture, where you were, what you did next, if you called anyone, who you called, what action you took, if you operated a valve, what kind of valve it was, how did you operate it? Anything you did, what your thought process was, anything behind that, up until the point where you were relieved and sent home for the day. So I'm going to stop talking, and you're going to talk for a while.

A. Okay. I got off work, I was at -- I also farm as a part time job after work. I was at my farm working, and at 4:40 p.m., I got a call from a friend of mine named Nick Jones (ph.) that works at Owingsville dispatch -- that's in Bath County -- said there was a potential rupture in the Hillsboro area, and I could see the fire from my farm, and I knew it was in the -- somewhat of the area of our lines.

So I called my boss at 4:41 p.m., Bart Johnson, and told him that the dispatcher from Owingsville called me and said we had a potential rupture due to phone calls coming in from the Hillsboro area. I asked him if he wanted me to go investigate. He said yes. So I left my farm and my home, driving my company truck, and started heading towards the Hillsboro area.

At 4:51, I got a call from Scott Trusty, mechanic here in Owingsville. He asked if I've heard about it, and I said yes, and I said that it appeared to be in the Muses Mill area, just on the other side of Hillsboro.

And also at 4:51, I called Bart, told him that numerous

people have been calling me that I'm friends with from that area. I said it appeared to be in the Tom Ishmael Road area of -- it's in between Hillsboro and Muses Mill.

5:05, I called Bart once I arrived at the Highway 10/13 road crossing, which you can see down through the valley, and I confirmed that it was on what we call Martin Mill Hill, which was off Martin Mill Road.

Also at 5:05, I tried to call 911 to inform them that it was our rupture, and we needed assistance with emergency response crews, and told them the roads to block off. But my call got dropped before I got it all out.

5:06, I continued on, turned up Martin Mill Road. Once I got up Martin Mill Road, you go into a farm lane to get to the right-of-way. I seen the Hillsboro fire department truck was already there, and I asked him to block the road as I went to the other access point at Tom Ishmael Road.

I knew we had crews up in that area working. I was more concerned about them once I seen where it was at. I passed one of the employees on the road that I've been friends with for a while. He's their safety guy for Otis Eastern pipeline contractor. He informed me that all the people was already away from the job site and nobody injured. I asked him to follow me back to Tom Ishmael Road, which we arrived at at 5:10. I asked him to secure the road, or Tom Ishmael, no traffic through except for Enbridge employees.

5:16, I called Joey Grimes, our station operator, to see what line it was, and he said it wasn't for sure. He wasn't quite to the station yet. He wasn't in the control room yet. At the end of 5:16, Joey called me back and informed me gas control called him, said it was line 10.

I radioed Scott via truck radios at 5:18 to ensure he knew it was line 10, to close the line 10 valve at Muses Mill to isolate.

At 5:32, Jason York (ph.), Bath County emergency management coordinator, which I had called earlier -- I forgot about that. I called him, oh, somewhere around -- somewhere between 4:50 and 5:00 and asked him to send (indiscernible) mechanics emergency management coordinator to send emergency response crews to the Tom Ishmael Road area and to secure the area and ensure nobody was in danger or injured. At 5:32, Jason York called me back, said he was at the 10/13 road crossing. He said that there was no flames visible from 10/13 at that time.

5:39, Bart Johnson arrived at Martin Mill Road, where I met him, and we started discussing what needed to go on next. We noticed there was a group of people at the top of the hill in one side-to-side, above the rupture. They was up there, and he told me to go up top and get them back from the area. So I went back around the Tom Ishmael Road, up the access road to the top of the hill. I told them people to get back to a safe muster point, approximately 600 yards away from the rupture, which they all did voluntarily.

At 5:43, I called Dustin to bring a side-to-side, because at 1 Martin Mill access point, it's pretty swampy getting up the 3 right-of-way, before you get to the hill. And Bart made his way 4 on foot to the rupture area via the Martin Mill access road. Let's see. Yes, at 6:00, I made it to the top of the hill 6 and secured the area. Pretty much, we had the Forestry people showing up by that point; we had -- I think the lady from the EPA, if I'm not mistaken, was there. The line was isolated at that time, to my knowledge, and the fire was down to a minimal -- more or less the size of a campfire. The area was secured. Nobody was hurt. Nobody was in the danger zone of the release again, that could potentially happen.

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8:30, Bart Johnson told me to go to the Martin Mill access and assist Dustin Bailey in security of that end of the access to the right-of-way, which I did. Marths

9:39 p.m., I called Rich Mark (ph.) to see if he was in route Corrosion wheelersburg (indiscernible) tech from Williamsburg, Ohio, which is over Owingsville, north side of Owingsville station area, (indiscernible) tech to see if he needed assistance with anything. He informed me that he was almost to Martin Mill Road.

At 10:05, I helped shine light so Rich could see, turned the rectifier off and provide him a lockout/tagout lock to lock the rectifier out of service. 1 ocking

At 10:10, when we was get the rectifier on the right-of-way, we happen to notice that the fire had flared back up a little bit.

Not great size, but it was smaller than it -- or it was bigger
than it had been for a little while. Bart Johnson informed us to
just stay at the site until security could get there to clear the
area for the next day.

At 7:15 a.m. on May the 5th, Don Clark (ph.), pipeliner from Bis Sandy pipe (indiscernible) line showed up and relieved me. We then went back one to the station, done a few things, checked phone calls for that day, and then Bart told us to go home and get some sleep and come back later that evening.

That was about it.

communications, I guess?

- Q. Well, thank you very much, Bryson. I appreciate it. I know that it's a long stretch to talk straight, so I appreciate the level of detail. I'm going to go back and ask you a little bit more about a couple of items.
- A. Okav.

- Q. I noticed throughout kind of your description here, you mentioned a lot of different EMS personnel. Are you kind of your area's public awareness coordinator? Do you just happen to know a lot of folks in that? Or why were you making all those
- A. Well, I am our site team leader here at Owingsville station.

 I'm also our, I guess you could say (indiscernible) pipeliner,

 since we've had one retire recently. I also am our damage

 prevention representative and our as far as our area goes. I

 have been to paradigm meetings and got to know some of these

folks. Most of the people I've talked to in this transcript, I'm actual personal friends with aside from work. I also know a lot of people just in our region of where we live.

Q. Okay.

A. Like the Nixons and whatnot.

Mabry

- Q. Okay. I kind of got that impression. You seemed to kind of know everybody.
- 8 A. Yes.
 - Q. Well, good. I have to say, it sounds good that you have a friend over at dispatch who gave you that call. The folks from Otis, you said you had a friend over there that were out there for the anomaly work. Had they already gone home for the day? Or where were they at?
 - A. I met Joe Neighbors, the safety director, he -- I passed him, I met him on the road, on Watson Road in between Martin Mill going towards Tom Ishmael. He said that nobody was up there when it happened. He was just making sure nobody, I guess, went back up that way on as far as the contractors.
 - Q. Okay. Okay. Now, there was one section where you were talking about letting Scott know that it was line 10 when you got confirmation from Joey and that you were using radio comms, and at another point, you mentioned you had a call drop. I haven't been to that area, but I've seen some pictures, and it looks pretty hilly. I'm guessing cell phone service is fairly patchy.
- 25 A. Yeah, just depending on if you're on a hill or in a holler.

It does come in and go out. But we're able to talk through our radios as far as communication between Enbridge employees in that area.

- Q. Do all of your company trucks come equipped with radios?
- 5 A. Yes.

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- 6 Q. Okay, and I'm assuming you haven't had any issues with radio 7 communications.
- 8 A. No, we haven't.
- Q. Okay. Tends to be a lot more reliable. Now, you were talking about keeping the public back, and you mentioned that you moved them 600 yards away from the rupture. Why did you choose that distance?
 - A. It was -- the rupture was down over the hill. I just, I know our initial blast radius is 660 feet on that line; I knew 600 yards would be past that if anything happened to re-flare or, you know, reignite, or I guess you could say an explosion again. I just felt like that was a safe distance. It was above them elevation wise probably -- I'm going to guess 60 feet, and we was away in a field way back a—(indiscernible). There was a row of trees in between them.
 - Q. Okay, and you said you had good cooperation on that. After that initial move back, did you have any issues later in the night with people trying to get onto the site or anything like that?
- 24 A. No, I did not.
 - Q. Okay. Now, it sounds like you know a lot of folks in the

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area personally and professionally. What kind of outreach work do you do as damage prevention rep for your area?

We now have a quarterly meeting with the -- this one county in our area that's in the Central Kentucky damage prevention group. The rest of them are considered Northern Kentucky, which and greenup is Fleming, Lewis, -- that extends my area, but we have quarterly meetings and we have yearly meetings with the paradigm group, just putting on a seminar more or less about what to do, what not to do, ways of identifying pipelines for our public awareness and for our contractors in the area.

I have pretty good relationships with our local contractors as well, as far as dealing with them on phone calls. Our landowners also, I've got to know some of them on a personal level, and they we have a good working relationship.

We do -- our company gives out grants to our emergency responders semi-annually, and I make sure that all of our emergency responders get the packet information for that, meeting with them in person. And that's helpful with them getting new them so equipment in our area to help -- they can help us in a time of need like this.

We also do an annual update of information from our emergency responders, you know, as people retire and people change positions. We do it every January and February and make sure we get to each county that we go through to make sure our contacts are updated.

- Q. That all sounds great. Do you ever do like practice drills for emergency response situations with any of the local emergency response units?
 - A. You're saying emergency simulations?

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- Q. Yeah, drills or simulations. Anything like that. Tabletop or otherwise.
- A. Yeah, we do have, we do have tabletops. We had -- I think we had one last year with our local emergency responders to come out to our site. We discussed all of our things we had here and what all to do and what not to do.

We also had the semiannual -- our own simulation within our company of emergency response. It's actually not tabletop. We go out and actually respond. Like sometimes, they'll give us a random call and tell us that it's -- we know it's a simulation, we have to get to the site and tell them what valves are operating, what valves are not going to operate.

At times, we'll simulate phone calls to emergency responders, and that's all based off different scenarios that they give us from the time it starts to the time it's over with.

- Q. Okay. How long would it take you, normally, to get from your house to Muses Mill?
- 22 A. In my personal truck or in my company truck?
- 23 Q. Company truck.
- A. If I was just going to leave and go there, probably 30 minutes or so.

- Q. Okay, and how about --
- 2 A To the valve site.

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- $3 \mid Q$. To the valve site.
 - A. That's the Muses Mill valve.
- 5 Q. And how about to Owingsville station?
- 6 A. About 10 minutes.
- Q. Okay. Now, so you're a lot closer to the station than you are to that valve site then.
- A. Yes. I'm about 10 miles from the station, and it's probably 20, probably 20 miles to the valve site, I suppose, just like an estimate.
- Q. Got you. Okay. Did you have any difficulties the night of the rupture getting to and from anywhere? Was there any kind of -- just any difficulties at all?
- A. I did not have any difficulty until I got to Watson Road at the right-of-way crossing. There was a lot of sightseers, people in the way, people taking pictures. But I managed to get around them safely and onto the actual access point. I could see the rupture from where they was at, obviously, but I had to get to the actual access and ensure nobody was in there.
- Q. Okay. And you said when your friend called from the dispatch, you could also see the fire from your farm. Is that correct?
- 24 A. I could.
- 25 Q. What were you seeing? Can you describe it for me?

A. It was just a ball of fire. I knew it was in the area that right of way goes our just knowing the local terrain and working where I'm at and which way I'm looking, I knew that it was close to our area that our lines went through that part of the county.

- Q. There was a big enough fire and in the general direction of the pipeline that you were able to tell that it was a pipeline fire, essentially.
- A. Yeah, it's -- well, I had seen -- I was a child, I was a kid when our last (indiscernible) but I knew right away what it was.
- Q. Okay. My last question for you is about staying overnight. Is it normal for you to do your own kind of site security while there's still a little bit of a fire? I know it wasn't a raging blaze or anything at that point; it was just the residual fire. But is it normal for Enbridge folks to do site security and not for, say, the local EMS?
- A. I'm going to say yes because this is my first actual response to a rupture. But, with that being said, there was still a fire burning; it was very minimal. But we were making sure as a company that we have ground personnel on site because the line was totally up, totally split (indiscernible) but no gas was in it.

And not really rely on emergency responders to secure the area. We do have a third party security team that does work site security for us, but we wouldn't turn the site over to them to be security on until we was sure that the line was swept of gas and there was no chance of the fire flaring back up.

- Q. Okay. And I know I said that was my last question for you, but I had another one come to me. How did you know what you were to be doing when you got there? You know, whether you were to go to Muses Mill and shut valves, whether you go to the station and shut valves, whether you go to do site security. How did you know what your role was walking into that?
- A. We talk about it at Owingsville, like in the event of ruptures or emergency response, certain people cover certain valve sites, so to say. Me being the first call, receiving the call, our first priority is, you know, public safety. And we -- I knew I had to get to the site first. Bart would instruct people to go close the valves. I was there to ensure, for one, that it was our line, confirm that, then also confirm that there was no, nobody's life at risk.
 - MS. COLLETTI: Okay. Well, thank you very much. I'm going to pass you off to Alvaro now for more questions.
- 17 MR. PRICE: Okay, thanks.
- 18 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Thank you, Alex.
- 19 BY MR. RODRIGUEZ:

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- 20 Q. Again, this is Alvaro Rodriguez with the Accident
- 21 | Investigation Division of PHMSA. Thanks for providing a detailed
- 22 | timeline of the event. Have you been in this part of the
- 23 | right-of-way before the incident?
- 24 A. Have I been -- can you repeat that?
- 25 Q. Have you been in this part of the right-of-way before the

- incident? Were you familiar with it?
- $2 \mid A$. Yes. I'm familiar with the right-of-way.
- Q. And did you notice before the incident, did you notice
 anything in the area that they have probably modified? Or there
 was something wrong with the area?
- 6 A. No, sir. Not that I could recall.

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someone else?

- Q. Okay. And could you please describe the procedure while you were on this scene? You were there for quite some time, guarding and making sure that the site was safe and everyone was away.
- 10 A. I didn't quite understand what you're asking.
- Q. Did you, did you notice -- well, you mentioned that when you were uphill, you saw some people, and you instructed people to be away. Did you notice anyone else when you were -- were you with
- A. Me and Bart Johnson, my supervisor, was at the access point of our right-of-way on Martin Mill Road, and you can see past the rupture up to the top of the hill. We noticed people up there, so I went to the top of that, to our other access point via Tom Ishmael Road, to get up there to where they was at and inform them to get back to a safe location.
- Q. Oh, okay. I see. And is there anything else you think you could have done differently?
- A. I don't think so right away. I think we responded pretty quickly in my opinion. We ensured that, first and foremost, the public was safe and nobody's in potential danger, which was our

priority over everything else. But I can't say that I would have done much different, no.

MR. RODRIGUEZ: Okay. Well, thank you very much for your time today. I don't have any other questions.

MR. PRICE: Okay. Thank you.

MR. WOODEN: Hello, Bryson, this is Tom Wooden. I don't have any additional questions at this time. Thank you.

MR. PRICE: Okay, thanks.

BY MS. COLLETTI:

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Yes.

- Q. This is Alex Colletti. I just wanted to talk to you a little bit about the terrain out there on the right-of-way. You mentioned a side-by-side ATV, and like I said, I haven't been out there, but I've seen pictures, and I'm sure in the springtime, you guys get quite a bit of rain. How difficult is traversing that right-of-way and, you know, what kind of equipment do you need to get along it?
- A. Well, most of our, I mean, just right-of-ways in general, I mean, between the snakes and the insects, ticks and spiders --
 - A. -- you're out in the middle of nowhere kind of. You don't want to be on foot if you can avoid it. So we like to take side-by-sides for our personal safety as much as for any reason, really. You can walk -- I mean, you don't have to have a side-by-side, but we do so just to stay out of the area of those potential venomous snakes or insects.

Q. Completely understood. I was more thinking along the lines of was the soil condition difficult to traverse. We did the same thing out west, but it was rattlesnakes and moccasins. But same idea, so yeah. I've never seen a grown man jump so high until you've seen a rattlesnake.

MS. COLLETTI: Well, I don't have any more questions.

Alvaro, do you have any more questions?

MR. RODRIGUEZ: I don't.

MS. COLLETTI: Tom, are you good?

MR. WOODEN: Yeah, Alex, I'm fine. Thank you.

MS. COLLETTI: Okay.

MR. WOODEN: Nothing else from me.

MS. COLLETTI: Well, Bryson, I just want to thank you so much for your time and for going through it in detail for me. I appreciate it. Your time is very valuable, and I know you've got a lot going on, especially right now, so thank you very much.

In about a month, you'll be getting an email of your interview transcript from me. You'll get a sheet of paper with a couple of checkboxes on it. It'll -- it's essentially just asking you to correct the transcript if there's any errors. If there's no errors, you can check the box with no errors and send it back. If there are errors, you can either mark up the transcript, or you can send me an email that says, on page 5, line 12, they spelled Otis "Otees" as opposed to "Otis." So spelling and locations tend to be the biggest thing, but there's other stuff that happens too.

If you think of anything else later, you can call me any 1 time. I'm going to give my information to Bart Johnson, so 2 3 hopefully he'll pass it along to you guys. But feel free to call or email me anytime. Memory isn't linear, so stuff comes to you 4 5 at weird times. Anything you think of later could be helpful. 6 MR. PRICE: Okay. 7 MS. COLLETTI: And, again, I just want to thank you for your time. I really, really appreciate it. 8 9 MR. PRICE: No problem. Thank you. 10 MS. COLLETTI: Do you have anything else that you'd like to discuss that I haven't asked you about so far? 11 MR. PRICE: No, not that I can think of. 12 13 MS. COLLETTI: Okay. Well, then I will stop taking up your 14 time, and I hope the rest of your afternoon is quiet and not full 15 of talking. And, with that, I will conclude the interview at 4:16 p.m. 16 17 MR. PRICE: Okay. Thanks. 18 (Whereupon, at 4:16 p.m., the interview was concluded.) 19 20 21 22 23 24

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

IN THE MATTER OF: ENBRIDGE INC. NATURAL GAS

PIPELINE RUPTURE AND FIRE IN HILLSBORO, KENTUCKY,

ON MAY 4, 2020

Interview of Bryson Price

ACCIDENT NO.: PLD20LR001

PLACE: Via teleconference

DATE: May 11, 2020

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.

Sandra Hirsch Transcriber