

**Statement by Lisa Daglian, PCAC Executive Director
Transparency and Public Involvement
At the MTA Board Meeting
MTA Headquarters, 2 Broadway, New York, NY 10004
June 26, 2019**

Good morning, I am Lisa Daglian, the Executive Director of the Permanent Citizens Advisory to the MTA, PCAC. I am here today to again talk about the importance of transparency and public involvement.

The MTA is seemingly in the public eye as never before. However, our concern is about what is happening *outside* of the public's eyes. I am referring to the debarment rules now in effect, and the reorganization plan now being developed.

For those not in the know, emergency debarment rules were quietly signed off on and presented to the Board during the executive session of the May 22nd meeting. They say that the MTA **must** debar contractors and consultants that are late or go 10% above budget. That's significant! What will happen to East Side Access; PTC; CBTC; and new equipment purchases? Do they just stop?

If it hadn't been for an item in Politico Pro – behind a pay wall – these far-reaching regulations might still be a secret not just from the public, but from the very contractors they are designed to debar. So on May 30th we sent a letter to MTA leadership asking why such important business was happening behind closed doors. While we have not yet received a response, we were glad to see a comment period announced in the June 5th state register. We will be weighing in and urge others to as well.

Similarly, we are very concerned about the upcoming reorganization plan being developed by AlixPartners. The nearly 9 million daily riders undoubtedly have a lot of ideas for reform, and they should be heard. But there is no provision for public involvement. Making sea change decisions should not be done in the dark, but should involve public engagement and discourse. No one is served by the rumors and fear mongering that is happening now.

Change is important, and a holistic look at the best ways to improve service and processes that will benefit the region's riders is the best way to get the best results.

Change needs to begin at home, at the top. Therefore, we ask that you, the Board, stop the secrecy and let the public be part of the solution.