

MTA passes \$13.5 billion budget

by Rebecca Harshbarger

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The MTA board passed a \$13.5 billion budget for the coming year Wednesday, as members proposed more service and workers protested outside for raises.

Allen Cappelli and Mitchell Pally, two members on the board, proposed creating a \$25 million fund for more subway and bus service, but the motion was tabled until next April for more study.

“There are significant places where this fund can be used,” said Pally. “We have people who wait 60 and 90 minutes [on Long Island], and if you miss the train you wait 90 minutes more. That’s unacceptable in today’s world.”



Outside, transit workers called for the MTA to give them a raise after their work building the system after Sandy.

Although TWU Local 100 president John Samuelson did not threaten a strike, he said a resolution had been passed by members on Saturday to take whatever action necessary to avoid a contract without wage increases and more out-of-pocket costs for healthcare.

“After their heroic response to Hurricane Sandy, and their remarkable efforts in rebuilding the transit system, I believe they should receive a raise that keeps up with the cost of living,” he said. “[Workers] have shown great patience throughout this process, but their patience is beginning to wear thin.”

As a Christmas present to the board, he gave a petition with 30,000 signatures from straphangers supporting a fair contract for workers.



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