

stayed pending reconsideration. Petitions to stay that do not involve environmental issues,¹ formal expressions of intent to file an OFA under 49 CFR 1152.27(c)(2),² and trail use/rail banking requests under 49 CFR 1152.29 must be filed by April 4, 2003. Petitions to reopen or requests for public use conditions under 49 CFR 1152.28 must be filed by April 14, 2003, with: Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20423-0001.

A copy of any petition filed with the Board should be sent to applicants' representative: Natalie S. Rosenberg, CSX Transportation, Inc., 500 Water Street J150, Jacksonville, FL 32202.

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemptions are void *ab initio*.

NYC and CSXT have filed an environmental report which addresses the effects, if any, of the abandonment and discontinuance on the environment and historic resources. SEA will issue an environmental assessment (EA) by March 28, 2003. Interested persons may obtain a copy of the EA by writing to SEA (Room 500, Surface Transportation Board, Washington, DC 20423-0001) or by calling SEA, at (202) 565-1552. [Assistance for the hearing impaired is available through the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.] Comments on environmental and historic preservation matters must be filed within 15 days after the EA becomes available to the public.

Environmental, historic preservation, public use, or trail use/rail banking conditions will be imposed, where appropriate, in a subsequent decision.

Pursuant to the provisions of 49 CFR 1152.29(e)(2), NYC shall file a notice of consummation with the Board to signify that it has exercised the authority granted and fully abandoned the line. If consummation has not been effected by NYC's filing of a notice of consummation by March 25, 2004, and there are no legal or regulatory barriers to consummation, the authority to abandon will automatically expire.

¹ The Board will grant a stay if an informed decision on environmental issues (whether raised by a party or by the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) in its independent investigation) cannot be made before the exemption's effective date. See *Exemption of Out-of-Service Rail Lines*, 5 I.C.C.2d 377 (1989). Any request for a stay should be filed as soon as possible so that the Board may take appropriate action before the exemption's effective date.

² Each OFA must be accompanied by the filing fee, which currently is set at \$1,100. See 49 CFR 1002.2(f)(25).

Board decisions and notices are available on our Web site at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>.

Decided: March 18, 2003.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 03-6923 Filed 3-24-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) Commission; Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under Public Law 92-463 (Federal Advisory Committee Act) that the Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) Commission will meet on April 2-4, 2003, at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City, 2799 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA 22202. The sessions on April 2-4 will begin at 8:30 a.m. each day and end by 4 p.m. on April 2, by 5 p.m. on April 3, and by 12 noon on April 4. The meetings are open to the public.

The purpose of the Commission is to conduct an external assessment of VA's capital asset needs and to assure that stakeholder and beneficiary concerns are fully addressed. The Commission will consider recommendations prepared by VA's Under Secretary for Health, veterans service organizations, individual veterans, Congress, medical school affiliates, VA employees, local government entities, community groups and others. Following its assessment, the Commission will make specific recommendations to the Secretary of Veterans Affairs regarding the realignment and allocation of capital assets necessary to meet the demands for veterans health care services over the next 20 years.

The April meeting is the third meeting of the Commission. On the morning of April 2, there will be a detailed briefing and discussion of how the Market Planning Template was applied in the solution planning process. On the afternoon of April 2, a status report on the reviews of the CARES Model will be presented. Also, on the afternoon of April 2 and continued on April 3, there will be briefings on the issues facing nursing and medical school affiliations with VA facilities, such as the impact of changes in resident work hour requirements, and the interplay with VA Community

Based Outpatient Clinics. On April 3, there will also be a briefing and discussion of the CARES Planning Initiatives and adherence to Planning Guidance. On April 4, the Commission will receive briefings from stakeholders and other governmental offices.

No time will be allocated at these meetings for receiving oral presentations from the public. However, interested persons may either attend or file statements with the Commission.

Written statements may be filed either before the meeting or within 10 days after the meeting and addressed to: Department of Veterans Affairs, CARES Commission (OOCARES), 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420. Any member of the public wishing additional information should contact Mr. Richard E. Larson, Executive Director, CARES Commission, at (202) 501-2000.

Dated: March 18, 2003.

By Direction of the Secretary.

E. Philip Riggan,

Committee Management Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

President's Task Force To Improve Health Care Delivery for Our Nation's Veterans; Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under Public Law 92-463 (Federal Advisory Committee Act) that a meeting of the President's Task Force to Improve Health Care Delivery for Our Nation's Veterans is scheduled for Wednesday, April 9, 2003, beginning at 9 a.m. and adjourning at 5 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Horizon Ballroom of the Ronald Reagan Building International Trade Center, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington, DC. The meeting is open to the public.

The purpose of the President's Task Force to Improve Health Care Delivery for Our Nation's Veterans is to:

(a) Identify ways to improve benefits and services for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) beneficiaries and Department of Defense (DoD) military retirees who are also eligible for benefits from VA, through better coordination of the activities of the two departments;

(b) Identify opportunities to remove barriers that impede VA and DoD coordination, including budgeting processes, timely billing, cost accounting, information technology, and reimbursement; and