



July 25, 2017 Board Meeting: Railroad Accident Report: Highway-Railroad Grade Crossing, Collision, Valhalla, New York, February 3, 2015

Acting Chairman Robert L. Sumwalt

Closing Statement

In closing, I would like to recognize the hard work of the NTSB staff in this investigation – not just the investigators, but to the NTSB staff that works tirelessly behind the scenes to support them.

And I would certainly like to thank my colleagues on the Board for their thoughtful consideration. The process is that each Board member meets with the staff individually before the Board meeting and makes comments. We each had our comments incorporated prior to today. I would like to thank you all, and for the staff for patiently listening to our comments.

Each time the NTSB investigates an accident in any mode, our purpose is to issue recommendations that, if acted upon, can save lives and reduce the number and severity of injuries.

In this case, we recommended risk assessment by companies and agencies, and corrective actions as warranted as the assessment results.

We also encouraged the town of Mount Pleasant to take appropriate actions regarding grade-crossing closings based on the township's traffic and the Federal Highway Administration grade-crossing safety guidelines.

But in grade crossing accidents, a lot comes down to the everyday drivers. Any such crossing, in any town, is potentially the site of a future tragedy.

The ultimate risk is in the hands of the driver, because the next train is always coming.

We hope that today's safety recommendations are acted upon, and that motorists act on the markings and warnings at grade crossings, to prevent tragedies in the future.

As an administrative item, we have another agenda item to consider today and that Board Meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m.

Meanwhile, we stand adjourned.

###