

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT
2150 Webster Street, P.O. Box 12688, Oakland, CA 94604-2688

BART ACCESSIBILITY TASK FORCE
Committee Meeting **DRAFT** Minutes
May 22, 2025

1. Roll Call of Members:

1. Anita Ortega
2. Bruce Yow
3. Catherine Callahan (2nd Vice-Chair)
4. Clarence R. Fischer
5. Danny Kodmur
6. Daveed Mandell
7. Emily Witkin - ABSENT
8. Herb Hastings (Chair)
9. Hillary Brown
10. Janice Armigo Brown
11. Janien Harrison
12. Joshua Saunders
13. Roland Wong
14. Sam Buman
15. Shana Ray
16. VACANT
17. VACANT
18. VACANT

Quorum of eight (8) in-person appointed BATF members.

Member Janice Armigo Brown announced she was attending the meeting via teleconference under the Just Cause provision of Government Code Section 54953(f).

BART Customer Access and Accessibility Department Staff:

Elena Van Loo
Ryan Greene-Roesel
Kevin McDonald

BART Director (s), BART Staff, Speakers, and members of the public:

Sabrina Baptiste (BART staff)

Mayra Perez (Captioner)
Alicia Garispe (Captioner)
Sara Desumala (Guest)
Aleta Dupree (Guest)
Valerie Buell (Guest)
Rinu Nair (Guest)
Troy Russell (Guest)
Tonya (Guest)

2. Public Comments

Aleta Dupree felt it is important for people to see and hear somebody who is from beyond their own group. She mentioned she has expectations and asked how to move forward given that Christine Arseneault is longer with us who made a strong effort to welcome her and took her seriously. Aleta Dupree asked to carry that welcome forward.

Valerie Buel shared she works for the California State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD) and was a former member of the BATF. She mentioned that SCDD is collecting stories from people about Medicaid and what has done for them and encouraged members to visit SCDD's website to share their stories.

Sabrina Baptiste, BART staff, introduced herself and shared she works in the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) Department.

3. Approval of April 24, 2025 meeting minutes

Clarence R. Fischer moved approval of the March 27, 2025 meeting minutes with amendments. Hillary Brown second the motion.

- Motion passes with eleven (11) in favor, one (1) against, and one (1) abstention.

4. BART's compiled and analyzed customer complaints related to accessibility for the third quarter

Ryan Greene-Roesel and Elena Van Loo presented on the agenda item. The full presentation was included in the BATF May's 2025 agenda package.

Hillary Brown liked the presentation and she mentioned she filed a complaint a few months ago about a bike that was in the priority seating area.

Roland Wong thanked Ryan Greene-Roesel and Elena Van Loo for the update of the third quarter complaints. He wonders how accurate data is, given that some people do not report incidents within the BART system because it takes a while to report. He mentioned he would like to reach out to BART staff to report any repairs and thinks going through other means does take a longer time.

Danny Kodmur asked whether this presentation is for the third quarter complaints. He asked if staff is not available at BART station, if this complaint is considered a personnel-related complaint.

Clarence R. Fischer noticed the accessible fare gate at Hayward was not functioning. He asked if BART Station Agents would keep track of how many users get into or out of the BART system through alternate means.

Bruce Yow asked how to file a complaint. Ryan Greene-Roesel shared that there are multiple ways to file a complaint with BART.

Joshua Saunders wondered if there were no station agent (s) at their booth where he needed assistance locating the bus stop, if this would be an accessibility complaint.

Janien Harrison was curious if there will be future quarterly reports and would like to see trends tracked over time.

Catherine Callahan wanted to echo the importance of tracking when the elevator gates are down because it has a huge impact on commute. She stated the elevator faregates are not functioning, and this has become a more widespread issue than the elevators being broken.

Sam Buman mentioned he filed a complaint due to the fact that he was told he could not ride his scooter within the BART system. He stated he received a notice that he will be contacted but had not yet heard back and would like to be contacted.

Daveed Mandell asked how a complaint would be classified if there are no BART Station Agent (s) to assist a person who is blind or a person who is low vision to exit and/or enter the BART station.

Aleta Dupree said this presentation was good. She brought up the priority seating and asked if you really know the person sitting in the priority seats is disabled. She mentioned some people may think that she is not disabled and added this has not been an issue with her but has been with others. Aleta Dupree stated the elevator is for everybody. She mentioned that if she made a complaint she would say she has a disability and hopes they will believe her.

Herb Hasting thinks there should be better notification when the escalators change directions.

5. Nominate and elect a BATF Chair; nominate and elect a Vice Chair and Second Vice Chair, if vacant

Elena Van Loo and Ryan Greene-Roesel led agenda item.

Elena Van Loo asked Catherine Callahan if she would like to continue being the 2nd Vice-Chairperson and she confirmed that she wished to continue to be the 2nd Vice Chairperson until September 2025.

Chairperson nomination and election:

Herb Hastings nominated himself.

Herb Hastings gave a short speech to why he would be a good candidate as Chairperson.

Voting results for Chairperson:

Herb Hastings – fourteen (14) in favor, zero (0) against, zero (0) abstention (s)

Vice Chairperson nominations and elections:

Hillary Brown nominated herself.

Shana Ray nominated Joshua Saunders and he accepted.

Hillary Brown gave a short speech to why she would be a good candidate as Vice Chairperson.

Joshua Saunders gave a short speech to why he would be a good candidate as Vice chairperson.

Voting results for Vice Chairperson:

Joshua Saunders – seven (7) in favor

Hillary Brown – five (five) in favor

Two (2) abstentions

Elena Van Loo announced the new Chairperson will be Herb Hastings until September of 2025 and Joshua Saunders will be the new Vice Chairperson until September of 2025.

6. Discuss canceling the August 28, 2025, and December 18, 2025, BATF meetings

The committee discussed cancelling the August and December meetings.

Danny Kodmur asked if there were any mentions of number of meetings in the BATF By-Laws and Ryan Greene-Roesel confirmed that there are no mention of number of meetings in the BATF By-Laws.

Daveed Mandell asked whether the annual BATF holiday gathering would be in December. Elena Van Loo responded that it would be in January 2026.

Sam Buman asked why the number of meetings are not in the BATF By-Laws and asked to look into adding into the by-laws.

Joshua Saunders stated having ten meetings per year is good for flexibility reasons.

Clarence R. Fischer was surprised about the ten meetings per year and as a long-time member, there has been twelve (12) meetings a year except cancellation due to lack of agenda items. He, too, would like to look into changing the by-laws on the number of meetings per year. Herb Hastings also liked Clarence R. Fisher's vision.

Roland Wong agreed with Clarence R. Fischer to keep the twelve (12) meetings per year and mentioned by having ten (10) per year, we are going to constraint ourselves.

Hillary Brown liked having the twelve (12) months per year and that is why she liked joining the BATF.

Danny Kodmur asked how far in advance cancellation notices must be posted to the public. Elena Van Loo said within 72 hours of the approved BATF meeting date.

Anita Ortega stated that she likes ten (10) meetings per year. She mentioned having ten (10) meetings per year may affect the number of absences per year, which is four (4) absences per year (under the BATF By-Laws).

No action was taken regarding the cancellation of future BATF meetings.

7. Discuss re-posting the BATF recruitment article on the bart.gov website

Elena Van Loo led the agenda item.

Elena Van Loo shared she intended to post a recruitment flyer for the BATF.

Danny Kodmur asked about other means to share the BATF recruitment flyer. Sabrina Baptiste encouraged BATF members and members of the public to share within your circle of friends through social media and emails, and often BART's website will have a link to apply.

Clarence R. Fischer asked if flyers of BATF recruitment can be put on trains and maybe once a month, put on destination signs.

Joshua Saunders, Shana Ray, and Daveed Mandell suggested emailing the BATF recruitment flyer to BATF members and to the BATF community list so they can share with friends, family, and co-workers.

Janice Armigo Brown suggested having a BART table at the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) Disability Conference in June of 2025 to pass out the recruitment flyer.

Roland Wong stated that he would like to see more diverse disabilities represented within BATF.

Janien Harrison suggested reaching out to colleges in San Francisco. Shana Ray agreed with Janien Harrison.

Aleta Dupree stated that she would like to see the BATF reach a full roster and have potential members be "waiting in the wings." She would like BART to reach out to veterans to join the BATF and hoped that veterans would be welcomed and willing to vote for them.

Valerie Buell stated that she wants to make sure the flyers are accessible for all.

Daveed Mandell moved to post "BART is recruiting new members for the BART Accessibility Task Force (BATF)," article under the BART news effective June 2, 2025. Clarence R. Fischer seconded the motion.

- Motion passed with fourteen (14) in favor, one (1) against, and zero (0) abstention.

8. Review and discuss updated tones to assist blind and low vision customers entering and exiting faregates

Ryan Greene-Roesel led the agenda item.

Ryan Greene-Roesel played five new different faregate tones to receive feedback on which tone (s) works best for people who are blind or people with low vision when entering and exiting the new faregates.

BATF members feedback on what sound tones works best:

- Hillary Brown liked the variety of sounds but mentioned the sounds have to be very clear when entering and/or exiting the faregates.
- Roland Wong liked the strings high tones.
- Danny Kodmur liked the bells tones
- Clarence R. Fischer liked marimba and piano tones
- Bruce Yow had a difficult time distinguishing each tone
- Joshua Saunders liked strings high tone
- Shana Ray liked the bells tone
- Catherine Callahan liked the bells and strings high tones
- Janien Harrison liked the bells tone
- Sam Buman liked marimba tone
- Daveed Mandell liked the bells tone

BATF members expressed the importance of piloting the tones in stations with different levels of background noise.

Members suggested Civic Center/Union Plaza BART Station, Rockridge BART Station, and/or El Cerrito del Norte BART Station to use as pilot stations.

Aleta Dupree favors the piano type of tone. She suggested using West Oakland to test all five different tones, one for each faregate and invite BATF members and members of the public to test the faregates and give feedback.

9. Member announcements

Sam Buman mentioned that a friend of his may be interested in being a BATF member and mentioned he stated this last month's BATF meeting.

10. Staff announcements

No staff announcements.

11. Chairperson announcements

Herb Hastings shared that he is involved in the new Clipper Card 2.0 project to test the updated version within the BART system.

12. Future agenda items – member suggest topics

- Clipper Card 2.0 update
- Minutes vs. transcripts
 - Minutes used under the BATF By-Laws
- Number of approved meetings to add to BATF By-Laws
 - BART staff will research if other BART advisory committees specify a certain number of meetings per year as part of their by-laws

13. Adjournment

Clarence R. Fischer moved to adjourn the March 27, 2025 meeting and Hillary Brown second the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:21 pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting, Thursday, June 26, 2025.