

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
April 24, 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 – ABSENT
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 Janien Harrison 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
Bob Franklin
Ryan Greene-Roesel

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

Director Robert Raburn

Lisa Raffetto (BART staff)
Maureen Wetter (BART staff)
Allen Chew (BART staff)
Dennis Lee (BART staff)
Mayra Perez (Captioner)
Alicia Garispe (Captioner)
Sara Desumala (Guest)
Helen Walsh (Guest)
Aleta Dupre (Guest)
Lucky Maxwell (Guest)
Nora Lewis (Guest)
Troy Russell (Guest)
Tyler (Guest)
Nicola Fraser (Guest)
Jerry Grace (Guest)

2. Public Comments

Aleta Dupre shared that today's public comment was not easy. She stated that she found the behavior of one of the BATF members at a previous meeting to be very concerning to her because it sounded like it directly berated employees of BART and the institution of BART as a whole; however, she wished to focus more on the basic principles of conduct in meetings.

Aleta Dupre stated that she hopes that BATF will reach its full roster of eighteen (18) with a diversity of members, and that members will work together, and attend meetings regularly to share their thoughts.

3. Remembering Christine Arseneault

Herb Hasting led the agenda item.

Herb Hasting stated that Christine Arseneault was efficient, punctual, and a very good note taker and organizer.

Hillary Brown mentioned that Christine was honored during the BART Board of Director's meeting.

Roland Wong stated that he had known Christine for a short time but enjoyed working with her and was sad when he heard of her passing.

Danny Kodmor said Christine was more than a role model – she was a “possibility model,” which means someone is showing you what is possible, and Christine was very good at that.

Clarence R. Fischer said that Christine had a unique way of running BATF meetings. She allowed each BATF member and members of the public to express their opinions and welcomed everyone.

Bruce Yow said that Christine was a strong leader. She kept the meetings together and he felt saddened she could not finish her term as chair.

Sam Buman shared that he met Christine over a year ago and she suggested he join the BATF. He said Christine was a wonderful person and her death is a devastating loss to the community.

Daveed Mandell shared that Christine had a lot of plans for the BATF, especially with the new fare gates. She had a strong commitment to accessibility.

Janien Harrison did not know Christine very long but believed she made people feel welcome.

Ryan Greene-Roesel shared that she was impressed with Christine’s organizational skills. She mentioned Christine had asked about quarterly reports on accessibility complaints and an overview of the customer satisfaction survey, and wished Christine was present to hear the reports on these topics. Ryan stated that staff plan to honor her wish to bring a summary of accessibility complaints to the BATF quarterly.

Jerry Grace mentioned he knew Christine for a short time and she did a good job.

Aleta Dupre shared that she was sad when she found out about Christine’s passing. She said she felt Christine always welcomed her and took her seriously, and that Christine saw a bright future for the BATF, made connections with BART Board of Directors, and practiced external outreach.

Helen Walsh stated that she did not have the chance to meet Christine. She heard Christine inspired people to get involved and was touched by her leadership.

Herb Hastings thanked everyone for their comments honoring Christine Arseneault.

4. Approval of March 27, 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 nine (9) in favor, zero (0) against, and one (1) abstention.

5. BART January 2026 fare increase

Lisa Raffetto led the agenda item. The full presentation is part of April's BATF agenda package.

Daveed Mandell was concerned that the presentation had too many graphs which are difficult for people with visual impairments or people who are blind. He stated that he understands that all public transportation agencies are facing financial difficulties and voiced concerns that low-income people will not be able to afford public transportation when prices keep increasing.

Sam Buman commented that the public should be educated about why the fare increases are necessary.

Joshua Saunders asked for an example of how much fares will increase for a trip from El Cerrito Plaza to Downtown San Francisco. Lisa Raffetto gave an example of BART minimum fare which is currently at \$2.40 and effective January 01, 2026, the fare will increase to \$2.55.

Shana Ray echoed Daveed Mandell's concern that with the fare increase, BART may become unaffordable for low-income people and people with disabilities.

Clarence R. Fischer suggested that the next presentation on the topic of fare increases should provide examples of how much the fare will increase from one station to another.

Sam Buman asked if the fare increases are two-year or five-year increases. Lisa Raffetto stated the fare increase is biennial; every two years.

Roland Wong stated that the current fare between the Antioch BART station and the San Francisco International Airport (SFO) is already very expensive. He expressed concern that the fare increases will affect ridership, especially among low-income people and people with disabilities. He was concerned that BART is becoming too expensive for daily use and riders may need to find other means of transportation.

Janien Harrison wondered how the public, and especially seniors and people with disabilities, would know of the fare increases. Lisa Raffetto shared that the public will be informed of the fare increase.

Aleta Dupre expressed that the fare increase concerns her. She wondered if BART is getting any added revenue from reducing fare evasion.

Helen Walsh said that the fare increase was concerning, especially for people with disabilities, low-income people, and seniors.

Daveed Mandell stated that he would like fare discounts for people with disabilities and seniors to increase to 90% instead of the current discount of 62.5%.

Herb Hastings thanked Lisa Raffetto for her presentation.

6. BART's Customer Satisfaction Survey – Results for People with Disabilities

Maureen Wetter presented on the agenda item. The full presentation was included in the April agenda package.

Danny Kodmor asked if the percentage of people who identify as having a disability has been 7% since 2022, and Maureen responded in the affirmative. Danny asked if the survey asked about the type of disability and Maureen responded that it does not. She said that the survey only asked, “Are you a person with a disability?”

Clarence R. Fischer asked if BART had considered handing out surveys as people come into the station. He said this approach could get more responses, especially from seniors and people with disabilities. He also suggested asking more detailed questions related to seniors and people with disabilities like, “did you find seating while waiting for the train?”

Shana Ray asked if there was an option to take the survey online and asked if this was accessible for people who are blind or who have low vision. Maureen confirmed that staff provided a link and a QR code to take the survey online if desired.

Joshua Saunders mentioned that QR codes do not work for him due to the difficulty of aligning the smartphone with the code. Maureen mentioned that the direct link to the online survey was also provided.

Sam Buman asked if Clipper Card value could be given as incentive to encourage responses to the survey. Maureen said that survey respondents are entered into a drawing and have the chance to win Clipper card value.

Daveed Mandell would like to see surveys in braille for people with low vision or people who are blind.

Jerry Grace saw BART employees distributing the surveys and he was pleased with this.

Herb Hastings thanked Maureen Wetter for her presentation.

7. BART's Fiscal Year 2026 and Fiscal Year 2027 Preliminary budget

Allen Chew and Dennis Lee presented on the agenda item. The full presentation is part of the agenda package.

Daveed Mandell thanked Allen Chew and Dennis Lee for their presentation but wished they had made the presentation more accessible for people who are blind or people with low vision. He recommended referring to a recent book by Ron Brooks for best practices on making meetings accessible.

Sam Buman wanted to ensure that BART services will not be cut in the future. Dennis Lee stated that the BART Operations Planning Department and other departments will investigate what changes need to be made if a major budget cut occurs.

Shana Ray wondered if there will be a budget deficit in Fiscal Year 27 and if there will be a major increase in BART fares.

Bruce Yow asked how much capital funding is in the Fiscal Year 26 and Fiscal Year 27 budget.

Clarence R. Fischer asked if some of the budget for Fiscal Year 26 and Fiscal Year 27 is used to reduce fare evasion. Dennis Lee responded that some of the budget does go into station hardening.

Hillary Brown asked staff to define the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) revenues. Ryan Greene-Roesel stated the ADA revenues are collected from paratransit customers.

Helen Walsh asked about accessibility projects at BART. Ryan Greene-Roesel mentioned there is budget set aside to fund BART's Accessibility Improvement Program.

Herb Hastings thanked Allen Chew and Dennis Lee for their presentation.

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

Agenda item to be moved to a future BATF meeting.

9 Member announcements

Sam Buman mentioned that a friend of his may be interested in being a BATF member.

Joshua Saunders shared that he used his Clipper Card from his smart phone at the new faregates recently installed at the El Cerrito Plaza BART station. He received notification that his Clipper Card had been processed and the doors should have opened to enter the faregate but he almost ran into the fare gate due to the fact that the door did not open fast enough.

10. Staff announcements

Ryan Greene-Roesel shared that there will be a scheduled a walkthrough at Lake Merritt Station on April 28, 2025 to review the wayfinding in place during construction of the new faregates.

Bob Franklin announced that he had been appointed by the BART Board of Directors to be the Interim District Secretary and he will be taking a brief break from BATF.

11. Chairperson announcements

Herb Hastings, Vice Chair, thanked BATF members and members of the public for their patience as he took the new role as Chair and thanked Elena Van Loo for her assistance with running an effective meeting.

Herb Hastings announced he has been selected to try the new, updated, piloted Clipper Card 2.0 program.

12. Future agenda items – member suggest topics

- BART's compiled and analyzed customer complaints related to accessibility for the third quarter
- Tactile surfaces and directional indicators and guidance indicators

13. Adjournment

Roland Wong asked to adjourn the meeting by honoring Christine Arseneault. Hillary Brown moved to adjourn the March 27, 2025 meeting and Clarence R. Fischer second the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:18 pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting, Thursday, May 22, 2025.