



# **PUBLIC COMMENT**

## **BART Board Meeting**

**June 23, 2022**

**Item 4**

**From:** [aleta dupree](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Comments from the floor  
**Date:** Sunday, June 19, 2022 10:08:06 PM

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Secretary April Quintanilla, please forward this message to the full BART Board for the Station Meeting of 23 June, 2022.

Good morning President Rebecca Saltzman and Members.

Aleta Dupree for the record. (she, her).

I bring you my thoughts concerning the work and mission of the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District.

“Hearing the Hitmaker.”

I bring to you the thoughts and sounds of Mr Nile Rodgers, one of the most prolific creators and thinkers in the world of contemporary music. Perhaps some of you have heard of Nile Rodgers, but regardless, surely most if not all of you have heard his music. Unlike many other legendary musicians I’ve referred to who have come from other places, Nile Rodgers, as I do, comes from New York City.

I can’t say that the music of Nile Rodgers reminds me of railroading at all. But I do think of a story that has been related to me. You see, Nile Rodgers boarded a Metro North train at Grand Central Terminal, in New York City, to travel to his home in Westport, Connecticut. Upon arriving at his home, Mr Rodgers discovered that he had left his beloved and precious “Hitmaker” guitar on the train.

It took a lot of doing but in the end, thanks to a dedicated cadre of Metro North employees, Mr Nile Rodgers was reunited with his guitar. But more so I believe this. I think that the employees of Metro North would have gone to extraordinary lengths to help anyone in need, including myself, with challenging issues. I ask of you as a Board, can we build ourselves a BART that would do its all to help people in need, regardless of who they are. It is my hope that BART would aspire to that level of helping, because first and foremost BART is The Peoples System.

“The work must not stop.”

I have found myself speaking often of equity, as a person with disabilities, and not meeting societally established definitions. It is easy to talk about equity, but much harder to practice it. I wish that equity work came more easily. I consider the recently passed Fare increase, of which I am still saddened about. I fear deeply that the conversations about equity will be left behind, becoming only distant thoughts in the past.

I think of what happens when the electricity has gone out in my home, whether for a few seconds, or a few hours. Such is difficult, and I think of ways to prepare for it when it happens again. Yet when the lights come back on, I quickly put aside the ideas of battery powered lanterns, and backup batteries, among other mitigating measures. And the power fails again, and the cycle repeats itself. It takes work to do things differently the next time, these things I need to do.

And so it is my hope that you will spend time to bring forward and implement programs of equity to BART that will help those most in need. I am concerned that a day may come that the Senior and Disabled discount might be reduced to the federally mandated minimum of 50 percent. That is your right, and I’m not asking BART to give away the store. So we can talk about expanding Clipper Start and preserving discounts. But it’s all academic unless you as a Board prepare equity related agenda items, notice them, and discuss them and allow for Public Comment in a Meeting, and pass them. I ask that you not forget about the needs of the Public going forward, much like when the lights come back on after being out for a while. I ask that you consider yourselves stewards of this system of Public Transportation that is BART. BART should never be thought of as anyone’s personal train set, but a system that is indeed first and foremost about People.

“More can be done.”

I consider the complexity embedded in this system of Public Transportation that is known as BART. I do often ask myself, can more be done to improve the efficiency and reliability of our System. I consider the importance of maintaining and operating aircraft. I desire for BART to aspire to the level of meticulous accuracy that is required of keeping up aircraft. Yet I wonder if we are doing as much as we could. I consider whether we are keeping up with the use of electricity, a very high dollar item. And airlines have very specific protocols concerning the fueling of aircraft to satisfy various safety and technical requirements, I think any airline passenger wants to be assured that the engines will not quit working during a flight. Can we at BART to do more to ensure the reliability and safety of our System? I would hope so. Such demands rigorous application of the basic principles of inspection, measurement, and evaluation. I ask of you to learn about BART more deeply, and expect everyone at BART to perform at their highest and best level, the Public, including myself, expect no less.

“You never know what you’ll hear.”

I think back to a Sunday morning in the late summer of 2019. I was on my way to the Upper West Side of New York, near West End Avenue. I had gotten off of a New Jersey Transit bus at the Port Authority Bus Terminal. And my next stop was the 42 St Port Authority station of the New York City Subway, (A, C, E lines). And as soon as I passed through the fare gates, I heard something. I said to myself, that’s it, the guitar, the Nile Rodgers guitar. And I saw someone playing that guitar and I stayed around a bit. I saw the Subway not just as a way to get around, but as a destination in and of itself.

I’ll never know if I actually met Nile Rodgers that morning, and I didn’t stay around to ask. I figured that it was best to leave this great musician to making music, whomever they might be. I considered that I had almost fifty years of experience using that legendary and historic rapid transit system that is the Subway. It came to mind that the Subway is indeed the premier defining institution of New York City. The Subway is the one thing that brings New York, a city of almost nine million people together, and millions more from around the world as well. Yet New York is not just a city mostly on islands surrounded by water, but a part of a State with the same name, and more so part of this great Nation that is the United States of America. I ask that you not forget about the importance of BART. You see, I believe that BART can be more than simply a system of mobility and infrastructure, but more so an institution that can be of legendary and stately ideals. And that comes from this very reason, BART is indeed The Peoples System.

Thank you.

**From:** [David Madeloni](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Mask mandate comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 21, 2022 11:24:07 AM

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Good morning,

Please consider ending the mask mandate on BART. COVID-19 cases in the Bay Area and California have recently peaked. Several other Bay Area transit systems such as Caltrain, MUNI, and VTA don't require masks anymore. The same is true for many transit systems around the US, in cities such as Boston, Chicago, DC, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, Portland, Seattle, St. Louis, and others. Masks are also optional on many transit systems in Canada (e.g. those in Montreal and Toronto) and Europe (e.g. those in London and Paris).

In addition, vaccines became available for those under 5 today, closing a critical coverage gap.

The big issue for BART ending its mask mandate is Alameda County's mask order. I'd recommend that BART consult with the county to find out when the county mask order will be rescinded, and once that happens, rescind the BART mask mandate.

If the county doesn't respond or gives an inconclusive answer, my recommendation would be for BART to amend the BART mask mandate so that it will automatically terminate once any applicable county mask orders are rescinded.

Thank you.

**From:** [Redsunset Rose](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2022 3:13:02 PM

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my comment for the June 23 Del Norte in person meeting is a question.

What plans exactly are there to protect employees, in particular BART Operators and Station Agents from violence from the public? Same question for keeping riders safe from drugs, knives, and theft.

I am concerned that Operators, Station Agents, and riders will have to use their own wits and equipment to keep themselves and their property safe. If BART security fails to keep us safe, then anarchy will prevail.

Thank you for:

1. considering supporting heavier fines for those that threaten and abuse others
2. create heavier fines from stealing property
3. Installing full length gates
4. responding to comments from operators and stations agents regarding illegal activity, and
5. removing offenders from the BART system.

**From:** [Redsunset Rose](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2022 3:15:47 PM

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Rosa Esquivel  
El Cerrito Resident and long time BART rider.

On Wed, Jun 22, 2022 at 3:11 PM Redsunset Rose <[redsunsetrose@gmail.com](mailto:redsunsetrose@gmail.com)> wrote:  
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**From:** [Redsunset Rose](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 22, 2022 3:20:57 PM

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Correction. Final one, please

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1. considering supporting heavier fines for those that threaten and abuse others
2. create heavier fines from stealing property
3. Installing full length gates
4. responding to comments from operators and stations agents regarding illegal activity,
5. removing offenders from the BART system, and
6. listen to BART employees for what else can be done to make their daily jobs safer. Thanks.

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