



# **PUBLIC COMMENT**

## **BART Board Meeting**

**January 26, 2023**

**Item 4-A**

**From:** [Joe A. Kunzler](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Cc:** [Janice Li](#); [Alicia Trost](#); [Rebecca Saltzman](#); [robert.powers@bart.org](mailto:robert.powers@bart.org)  
**Subject:** For Item 4A of the 26 Jan 2023 meeting  
**Date:** Friday, January 20, 2023 6:46:42 PM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)

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Hi there BART Board of Directors;

Just heard from Director Li's Instagram that you have a colleague who thinks Robert E. Lee was a military genius and made remarks at a BART Board Meeting like "cotton picking inspirational" and praise for General Robert E. Lee may be well-intended but are really, truly historically ignorant. Sadly, this has become a pattern of conduct from Director McPartland that has to be censured.

I also say that, yes, I agree with Director McPartland that Robert E. Lee should have statues with big signs with the word, "RACIST" under the statue. Director McPartland is correct that we need to take a holistic look at history, but we certainly *don't need* to have "cotton-picking inspirational" statements made toward BIPOC staff. That's too far. Cotton picking was the main occupation of slaves in the Deep South, BTW.

Yes, you should please censure Director McPartland and counsel him to retire soon please. That said, committees are the most important part of the BART Board, and I would urge some caution on removing Director McPartland from committees. As we are seeing with the US House of Representatives, a vain Speaker-in-name-only can't make the distinction between Rep. MGT and Rep. Schiff. This is a dangerous game, and I would counsel *not* playing with political dynamite.

Director McPartland should have been given an opportunity at the meeting to apologize and revise his remarks. It is my understanding Director McPartland will do Thursday. The Board as a whole should recognize you are partly to blame here and General Manager Powers is 100% correct & proper in his measured response. I stand with General Manager Powers so much that I want to enter his statement into the official record:

**To: All Staff**  
**From: General Manager**  
**Date: January 18, 2023**

During the BART Board Meeting on January 12, 2023, BART Director John McPartland used a racist term when providing comments about the District's Racial Equity Initiative presentation. The language was insensitive and unacceptable to the staff delivering the presentation as well as embarrassing to the District.

Immediately following the incident, both fellow directors and BART staff brought the issue to Director McPartland's attention. He expressed regret and has [publicly apologized for using the language](#). Director McPartland has also agreed to reach out directly to the staff who were presenting at the time to personally apologize.

BART is committed to ensuring a workplace free of discrimination and providing a more inclusive and equitable workplace.

**Bob Powers**

On that note, I appreciate [what Director Duffy tweeted out](#). There needs to be an understanding that it's ok to make points of order to demand civility for and from each other.

If it helps I am having similar conversations with other bodies of government recently thanks to abusive public comments full of hate speech. My inbox is always open to you - all of you.

There you go;

Joe A. Kunzler  
[growlernoise@gmail.com](mailto:growlernoise@gmail.com)

**From:** [aleta dupree](#)  
**To:** [BART Board](#)  
**Subject:** Comments for Agenda Item 4A, Board Matters.  
**Date:** Monday, January 23, 2023 11:03:02 AM

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Secretary April Quintanilla, please forward this message to the full BART Board for the Regular Meeting of 26 January, 2023.

Greetings Board President Janice Li and Members,

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

I bring to you my various thoughts concerning the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District. I specifically speak on the matter of Agenda Item 4A, Board Matters, Action Concerning the Conduct of a Board Member.

I bring forth to you a matter that came to light recently, concerning things that were said at your last Board Meeting, convened on 12 January, 2023. I was at that Meeting, by way of the Zoom platform. I feel the need to write to you today. I found the comments made by Director John McPartland to be offensive and hurtful. I found the remarks to be hurtful to me personally, and I left that Meeting with a deep sense of sadness.

I'm going to begin with some sharing. I reiterate to you that I am simply an ordinary member of the Public and user of BART and other systems of Public Transportation as I have said before. I am a person of profound disabilities, some related to military service. I am also a person who does not meet societally established definitions, as I have also said before.

I don't know if my heritage and history has commonality with any of you, I'm sure though there are some common themes. The thing is that I don't know much about any of you. So I share with you some more about myself.

I submit to you that I was born in New York City, a place I mention often. I am descendant of several generations of forebears who were also born in New York City. I can say reasonably that further back in time, probably late 1800's, early 1900's, that forebears of mine came from Eastern Europe. I have gleaned some tidbits of information from what little family members know, and from various websites. I have been told some came from places called Minsk and Pinsk, in the nation now know as Belarus. I have been also informed about origins in southeastern Poland, and somewhere in Hungary, and perhaps Austria. I'm sure my forebears lived in abject poverty, some from an area known as the Pale of Settlement. I'm sure the journey out of such oppressive places was arduous, to say the least, most likely in steerage, and my forebears ended up at Ellis Island, in New York City. After a short boat trip they found themselves in the difficult and crowded surroundings of the Lower East Side.

I believe in the importance of being informed, and learning new things. In the summer of 2016 I came to Washington DC, my first time since I became an adult. I took my first trip on the Washington Metro, and found myself overwhelmed on the very long escalator of the Dupont Circle Station. I had a very important item on my personal agenda for my first full day in Washington DC, and I was wearing a skirt.

And so after breakfast I found myself at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, located near the National Mall and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. I spent much of the day there. I was profoundly affected. I had been to similar museums in the past, and reading related materials such "Night" by the late Elie Wiesel. And so I learned many new things, and also building on things I had already learned. I think I was most profoundly affected upon seeing the display of thousands of shoes taken from many who overwhelmingly did not survive. I left that building shaken, and knew there was much more to do, that the awareness of such matters must never stop, I am not able to find appropriate words to describe, such is often too hard for me to say.

I remember some time in 1998, I went to visit my grandparents in Tamarac, Florida. I flew on a cargo airplane and they picked me up at the Fort Lauderdale Airport. I remember one sunny afternoon, It was just me and my grandfather in the den, I think my grandmother had gone to the store. My grandfather had turned off the TV, perhaps tired of watching reruns of The Streets of San Francisco and Barnaby Jones. He fell silent and looked at me, I could

sense he was agitated, and then he spoke. He told me of extended family he had never met, who stayed behind in Europe, and that they were murdered in the Holocaust. I knew what he was talking about, even though he did not use the word Holocaust, it was just too hard. I could see his eyes burning, and I wondered if he was about to get more agitated, surely he was angry, and then he quieted down, and we had something to eat.

And so a few days later my grandparents dropped me off at the airport and I took a cargo plane back to New Jersey. I thought often about our time together in the den, and my grandfather sharing his truth with me. I came home profoundly affected. And so my visit with my grandparents was much more than our usual outings at Calder Race Course, and having lunch out. And that moment lives with me to this very day.

So why have I chosen to share these things about myself. It is because I believe that we become informed by personal stories. And things that are said can profoundly affect others even transcending the established lines of definitions. Words do hurt, because words often lead to actions that hurt, and I saw the deep and profound loss in my grandfather's eyes that day in Tamarac, Florida.

I assure you that my writing and speaking in this matter is not personal. I have been fortunate to have met Director John McPartland on several occasions. We share the common heritage and accomplishment of being Veterans of the United States Army. John and I have had many good conversations over the years. I do emphasize the need for constructive action on this matter at your Meeting. I have written to you in my various letter about equity, and that no one should ever be above the rules.

I submit to you that my credentials before you are nowhere near sterling. I have my history of skipping fare on the New York City Subway in 1980-81, as a directionless and disobedient teenager. I am not always known for being the nicest person. Yet I know better not to get myself 86'd from places, such is not something to be proud of.

I do feel that censure merits your consideration. More so I believe that the matter of removal from board committees requires your paramount consideration. It is essential to remember that an important part of committee work involves the taking of Public Comment. I wonder if people who could offer their thoughts to BART could be discouraged from doing so, given a fear of engaging with a Board Member who might be disrespectful, whether intentionally or not. Sadly the damage is done, and the clock can't be turned back. I still often think of a BART that doesn't know what to do with me when I appear on the scene. I vehemently impress upon you that my wearing of a skirt is not deranged or derelict, but my simply being my rigorously honest self. Yet I wonder if harmful statements made by Board Members could result in people who are different like myself finding our reasonable use of BART abridged or denied, simply on the basis of who we are.

I ask that you be willing to accept my testimony that I bring you in my letter, not to diminish it because I am different. It is my hope that you will take Public Comment on this Agenda Item, and recognize me to speak at the appropriate time.

I ask in this decision making process that you not be angry or acrimonious. I ask you consider this a matter to be handled with the great weight of solemnity. I impress upon you to not be arrogant or imperious. I hope you will have unanimity in your decisions on this matter. And this is because hurtful statements can potentially hurt everyone, even if not noticed at first glance. I hope that my writing to you will not result in retaliation. I ask that this process not result in me being denied service on BART, or being denied attendance and speaking at your Meetings. I engage with you respectfully and follow the Rules of Conduct. I ask this of you as you deliberate and come to your decision this day, to remember and uphold this most paramount of ideals. BART is The Peoples System.

Thank you.



# **PUBLIC COMMENT**

## **BART Board Meeting**

**January 26, 2023**

**Item 10-A**

**From:** [Alfred Twu](#)  
**To:** [Board Meeting](#)  
**Subject:** Please support state fiscal gap funding and regional funding measures  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 25, 2023 2:04:15 PM

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Hi BART Board

Hi BART Board

I bart to work and also use the Bart for non-work trips on both weekdays and weekends. In the last several months I've noticed more people barting, especially as more service has been added back.

Please support the initiative for fiscal gap funding from the state to avoid the upcoming fiscal cliff, as well as regional funding measures that can stabilize and improve BART service as part of a seamless Bay Area-wide transit system.

Thanks  
Alfred