



# **PUBLIC COMMENT**

## **BART Board Meeting – Workshop**

**February 23, 2023**

**Item 3**

**From:** aleta dupree <tsjoan@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 16, 2023 12:58 PM  
**To:** BART Board <BoardofDirectors@bart.gov>  
**Subject:** Comments from the wheel

Secretary April Quintanilla, please forward this message to the full BART Board for the Workshop Series to be convened on 23 February, 2023.

Good Morning Board President Janice Li and Members.

Aleta Dupree for the record, she, her.

I bring you my various thoughts concerning the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District.

“On Being Heard.”

I relate to you my frequent attendance and speaking at your Meetings, as I’m sure you are all well aware of. I mention to you that I was at a Board Committee Meeting recently. And at this particular Meeting, General Public Comment was on the agenda, to be taken just before adjournment. Yet for some reason the Public Comment was not called for and the Meeting was suddenly adjourned.

I share with you that such action upset me deeply. Perhaps the presiding officers of Meetings are not obligated to ask for and receive Public Comment. I assure you that I am not entitled. If I am remiss in bringing this matter up you have my deepest apologies.

Yet I do wonder, that if Public Comment is not taken, and because I am often the only one left to speak, is that because of my presence and who I am? To me I wonder if I am less than others on BART simply because I am different. I could understand if you might want to adjourn a Meeting if you fear being berated and insulted. Yet I assure you that I always approach you respectfully, even if we disagree. I ask that you not be apprehensive about hearing the words that I, Aleta Dupree, (she, her), bring to share with you for the record. I continue to share my thoughts and stories with you in the hopes of building a better BART, and upholding the ideal that BART is The Peoples System.

“Some things just don’t taste very good.”

I mention to you that I attended and spoke at the most recent Meeting of the BART Audit Committee. There were matters of what is known as Rule 1090. It has something to do with conflict of interest subjects. The word “disgorgement” was used, which I will not mention again, because even though it is a legal term, to me it is reminiscent of things that happen in bathrooms when one doesn’t feel very good.

And so the discussion of things regarding conflict of interest and repayment lead me to relate to you a story. You see, about two decades ago, I was working in the air cargo business. And it was during the peak holiday season, and there was much more work than usual. It’s is one thing to simply perform the manual handling of cargo. It is another thing to perform air cargo functions on and around aircraft. Such requires a team of highly trained and certified personnel. And I was one of a few that was trained and certified on all of the tasks of cargo handling that are required to be performed on and around aircraft. Such is also safety sensitive work. This includes protocols to prevent and avoid striking an aircraft with ground equipment, and awareness of the hazards that come with being around aircraft engines,

especially when they are running.

And so one Sunday morning, before the dawn, I was asked by management, today is a long day, we need you, can you do it. I said that I would, and made them aware of the twelve hour limit. I was assured that I had permission to exceed the limit, as such would not be in violation of any regulations. I did consider that some in senior management overseeing financial performance would be upset at the payment of double time, and scold front line management over it.

And so I performed seventeen hours of work that day, and took legally required breaks, and went home. And when I returned to work on that following Tuesday, a different manager scolded me for exceeding twelve hours, and the company having to pay me double time. I did respond that I was given appropriate dispensation. Eventually the manager in a kind of back room way thanked me for being there, perhaps unsure of how to deal with this conflicting matter.

So why do I bring this matter of a long day working around aircraft up? While conflict of interest matters are challenging, I state to you that I was not required to pay back any of the money that I earned that day, including the double time that the company was determined to avoid scheduling. I can't call myself an expert on contracting. Yet I do recognize that the work BART requires is often very specialized. Perhaps we need to approach the Legislature to find reasonable revisions to Rule 1090, so we can more easily tap into the community of services that can help us to build the best BART that we can. And when work is performed satisfactorily for BART, it should always be appropriately paid for in full.

“For some at the expense of others?”

I enlighten you of the importance of considering those who are different from yourselves. I do see that the BART Board is one of the most diverse Boards that I know, much like the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in New York City. And it is true that diversity is not easily measured, and should not be predicated on visual appearances alone. Yet I have to continue advocating in the name of diversity. It is true that I am not able to vote for you, given that I do not live in the BART district. But I maintain to you that I am a constituent just as much. I am not like any of you, but can you expand your consciousness to include people who are not like yourselves in the work and mission of building a better BART? I ask of you to consider the importance of equitable response. Yet I wonder about that, it seems to me that you advocate loudly for some constituencies, yet are silent concerning others. I ask that there not be favored constituencies at BART. You see, when constituencies are favored, such always leaves me behind, because I am very different. But would you be willing to sit with me in the cabin of the proverbial airplane that is BART? Can you consider people like myself who are different as not just welcomed, but needed on BART, toward building the best BART that we can. I hope that you will not be uncomfortable with people such as myself who are different in using this system just as you do. I have Reduced Fare, for legitimate reasons of disability, and not seeking to upend your budget, I pay my Fare, and follow the Rules of Conduct, that should be enough for me to ride as anyone else does. I believe that the future of BART comes from our diverse and different communities, seeing the value of Public Transportation as opposed to single occupancy automobile usage. I am no more than anyone else, I ask that you see me as no less. I ask that you be willing to uphold this most basic ideal without ceasing, BART is The Peoples System.

There are many ways to practice getting Right Down the Line.



Thank you.