



PUBLIC COMMENT

BART Board Meeting

March 23, 2023

Item 6

From: aleta dupree <tsjoan@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 22, 2023 10:58 AM
To: BART Board <BoardofDirectors@bart.gov>
Subject: Comments from the fixture

Secretary April Quintanilla, please forward this message to the full BART Board for the Regular Meeting of 23 March, 2023.

Greetings 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.

“Living the Values.”

I mention to you that my thoughts and ideas expressed to you are not simply academic expositions or implausible conjectures, but reflective of my deep seated values, I speak often of renewable electricity for BART and other systems of Public Transportation. Yet I don't seek after that as a bystander or spectator, but practice that as much as possible in my home. I think of several years of speaking at various Public Meetings about the subject. You see, I feel very strongly that renewable energy should not just be for those who have the real estate to install such generation systems. I feel that renewable energy should be for everyone, regardless of their station in life, and hopefully at a discount, and not a premium.

I admit to you that on my last trip here to my beloved Bay Area I used various scooters, some are of a stand up variety, and some also that I can sit on. And with many of those trips, there were connections to Public Transportation, including BART. I find small electric scooters to be helpful to me in navigating the Bay Area on very short trips, filling in gaps when bus and train service is infrequent or disjointed.

I did use BART a number of times, usually about three or four times a day. I am still concerned about service frequency on weekends, especially when going to the Oakland International Airport. I believe that no one should have to wait more than twenty minutes for a train to take them to any destination on the System, at any time of day or night. You see, when going to an airport, such is a hard commitment, where security must be cleared, and the boarding call answered. I ask that you strive toward a greater level of service on BART, especially for our worldwide constituency that uses airplanes, and intercity trains and buses.

And so I live my values, and frame them in positive impacts, even when speaking of them before boards and commissions who might not understand. And I am not the ordinary messenger, given that am very different, and wearing a skirt at the same time. And there are many respectful advocates who share their thoughts of what better Public Transportation should look like. And there is one a value that I think of often, and practice without ceasing, that BART is The Peoples System.

“On Matters of Inspection.”

I bring you my thoughts concerning Agenda Item 9A, the subject of Senate Bill 827, on matters pertaining to the Inspector General. I state to you that I am simply an ordinary user of BART, and do not claim expertise on Inspector General related subjects. However, I do claim standing to comment on this matter, and ask that you accept this written testimony that I proffer to you at this time.

I want the best Inspector General Program that we can have, just as I want the best in all things BART. That I believe is reasonable for any user of BART to ask and expect. I am concerned about overreach from outside of BART, and possible unintended consequences.

I consider this mention in the bill of creating a new criminal offense. This concerns me deeply, especially when people in certain groups are known to be prosecuted disproportionately in greater numbers than other groups. I feel that BART PD has more than enough to do, given many issues of public safety that need to be addressed. I think IG issues are best handled at most in the civil, and not in the criminal arena.

I feel that oversight must be truly independent, and ensuring there are guardrails, due process, and respect for the Fourth Amendment in any IG related proceedings. I feel our advocacy at BART is to work toward more funding from BATA, and such can be done by engaging with BATA at their Meetings and writing of letters, as I do myself.

It's easy to make comparisons to other systems of Public Transportation. I emphasize to you that BART is not the same as other systems. BART has some aspects that are unique, not really a Subway, or a commuter rail. We have a different kind of governance and operation than the Metropolitan Transportation Authority in New York City, for one example. I feel any program of inspection needs to be tailored to the unique needs and attributes of BART, and that BART itself knows those needs best.

It is my hope in this matter concerning the IG, and State legislation, to remember the many ordinary users of BART, especially those who are different from yourselves. For I want to enjoy this system just as anyone else does. I feel it highly inappropriate if someone under the aegis of "inspection" finds cause to inquire why I am using this system known as BART while wearing a skirt. That is something I should never have to answer. Yet it seems possible, if such legislation gives the IG unlimited authority to inquire, about anything and everyone.

"On Specifics."

I reiterate to you that I am not like any of you. I do ask of you to reach toward a greater level of consciousness when it comes to inclusion. I ask that you not just think of those using BART who are like yourselves, but also those who are not. Yet I wonder, are there specific groups that do have greater sway with you when it comes to the things of BART?" Can those of us who are unrepresented by not being in your electorate have a voice as well? I can only offer you my testimony as I know it. I admit to you that I do not have the highly developed skills of oratory and advocacy that one would find in attorneys employed by "white shoe" law firms. But I have my experiences, the things I experience with my own senses. I consider the unique sights and sounds of the New York City Subway. I have consumed various meals in the legendary and stately railroad station in New York City that is Grand Central Terminal. And I am not just about enjoying transportation, but I have many interests besides that as well. I admit to you that I often enjoy, since my teens, what I call "grandparents music", more often known as easy listening, going back to the days of the WPAT, Easy 93. I still seek after the very best of artisan hot chocolate around the nation, and using Public Transportation to get me there. I am afraid of flying on airplanes, and I have flown about fifty times and counting in the last two years. I am no better than the next person, I am simply different. I ask that you be willing to consider the diversity of your riding Public, and the various interests we all hold dear. I ask that you remember the importance of your General Manager, Bob Powers, who I believe shares my desire to build the best BART that we can have. I ask that you respect your staff, as I know them to be highly trained professionals in the art and science of railroading. More so I desire a BART that holds to ideals of being legendary and stately. I ask of all at BART, including yourselves, to practice this value that transcends time and place, that BART is The Peoples System.

Fear Not!



Thank you.



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