

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT
300 Lakeside Drive, P.O. Box 12688, Oakland, CA 94604-2688

Board of Directors
Minutes of the 1,868th Meeting
August 10, 2020

A joint Special Meeting of the Board of Directors and Regular Meeting of the BART Police Citizen Review Board (BPCRB) was held on August 10, 2020, convening at 4:00 p.m. via teleconference, pursuant to Governor Gavin Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20 and the California Shelter-in-Place mandate. President Simon presided; Patricia K. Williams, District Secretary.

Directors present: Directors Allen, Ames, Dufty, Foley, Li, McPartland, Saltzman, and Simon.

Directors absent: None. Director Raburn entered the Meeting later.

BPCRB Members present: Members Armstrong, Bruno, Gomez, Loo, Mensinger, Perezvelez, W. White, and Rizk.

BPCRB Members absent: Members Davis, Longmire, and D. White.

Director Raburn entered the Meeting.

David Rizk, Chairperson of the BPCRB, gave opening remarks and introduced President Lateefah Simon.

President Simon gave opening remarks and noted that Chairperson Rizk would chair the joint meeting. Chairperson Rizk outlined the procedural rules.

Mr. Robert Powers, General Manager, gave opening remarks.

Chairperson Rizk introduced Mr. Donald L. Casimere as the facilitator of the Meeting.

Mr. Casimere gave opening remarks.

BPCRB Members Davis and D. White entered the Meeting.

Chairperson Rizk called for Public Comment on Item 4 Only. The following individuals addressed the Boards:

Cephus Johnson
Nick Carraway
Karen
Wanda Johnson
Joe Kunzler

Gigi Gamble
Patrick Mortiere
Michael Petrelis
David
Dan
Kylie

Member D. White exited the Meeting.

Chairperson Rizk thanked the public speakers for their comments and brought Items 4 (a) BART Police Model Enhancements; (b) Overview of the BART Police Citizen Review Board Model; (c) BPCRB Stakeholder Input and Recommendations; and (d) BART Board of Directors' Comments and Feedback before the Boards. Mr. Rodd Lee, Assistant General Manager, External Affairs, presented Item 4(a) and Mr. Casimere facilitated discussion of the items.

The discussion included the following:

Member W. White commented on his experience with police oversight and the mental health industry; the need for mental health professionals in the Bay Area; and the role of police unions.

Member Gomez thanked the public speakers and commented on and/or inquired about drug use and overdoses; fare evasion; utilizing police for behavioral issues; partnerships between local counties to resolve issues of substance abuse; and platforms for homeless advocates and partnering with other entities.

Member Armstrong commented on the need to reimagine what policing means; ways to better serve the community; having the right tools to do the job; assistance for homeless individuals; policing crimes of poverty; structural issues, changes, and elements; the role of the police unions; more compassionate policies on the detention of transgender individuals; BART continuing to lead the way in reform; and reform as a journey, not a destination.

Member Perezvelez thanked the public speakers and commented on his experience with safety, the perception of safety, and transgender general orders; various Assembly Bills (AB) and Senate Bills (SB) (AB 392, SB 230, AB 1506, and SB 776); the need for a BPCRB Use-of-Force Subcommittee, rapid response teams for mental health crises, and providing additional training for BART dispatchers; and his viewpoints on reassessing priorities and not criminalizing homelessness and poverty.

Member Loo commented on his experience with professional rescues at stations; homeless and behavioral problems in the stations; the need for additional resources for more homeless outreach teams and after-hour homeless shelters; the safety and security of passengers; and partnering with regional municipalities and advocating for additional resources.

Member Bruno thanked the public speakers and commented on a rise in violent crimes at the stations; opposition to taking funds away from the police; fare evasion; police reforms; zero sustained complaints for racial discrimination or bias against police officers; success stories of reform at the BART Police Department (BPD); and the need for riders to have clean, safe, and reliable transit.

Member Davis commented on his experience with biased citations; the need to re-envision police funding; the need for culture changes in the BPD; and the need to focus on the source of critical issues that cause use-of-force incidents.

Member Rizk thanked the public speakers and commented on the need for evidence-based reforms; the need to collect more data on what the police officers are doing; Chief of Police monthly reports; low-level offenses; the need to refocus on core public safety missions of the BPD; fare evasion and proof of payment as equity issues; the need for racial demographics data; racial disparities in fare enforcement; and the need for a transparent process and public input and reducing bias in enforcement.

Member Mensinger thanked the public speakers and commented on assistance for homeless individuals and partnerships between local counties to provide additional assistance for homeless individuals.

President Simon thanked Chairperson Rizk for his comments regarding centering any stakeholder process on data and commented on hearing feedback from various stakeholders; collaborative decision-making; increasing safety; and the public will in the Bay Area for new voices and new ideas.

Vice President Foley commented on the goal of BPD as keeping passengers and employees safe; being safe versus feeling safe; the need for police officers and addressing the need for social services support and mental health experts in the system; the need for assistance from city, county, and state governments to provide mental health services and homeless outreach; refocusing and evaluating other agencies in relation to police reform; and asking Chief of Police Ed Alvarez, the BPCRB, and BART Police union leadership for their recommendations on what BART can do differently to ensure passenger and employee safety while riding BART.

Director Allen commented on defunding BART Police; agreement with being centered on data; drug activity in the system; the lack of assistance from county, city, and state governments with mental health and homelessness cases; the absence of a place for individuals who suffer from mental health issues or homelessness; and BPD Police Officers as de facto mental health workers and the only available help in many cases.

Director Ames commented on engagement with city and county partners; absence of a place for homeless individuals; the need for police officers; her constituents' concerns about safety; not reallocating resources now; working with partners; and developing a plan and deploying a collaborative approach.

Director Dufty recognized Director Raburn for his regular attendance at BPCRB meetings and commented on other agencies' evaluation of operations and creating public safety; BART's efforts to address homelessness; and the need to strengthen the accountability of county governments to assist BART.

Director Li commented on the stakeholder process; ensuring that a venue for the work exists to facilitate transparency and accountability; openness to defunding; commitment to working with stakeholders; and BART's leadership in police reform.

Director McPartland commented on reimagining police services; the benefits of assigning homelessness issues to Ambassadors; his recommendation against separating the Ambassador and law enforcement programs; the inability to provide housing and services; and partnerships with mental health services in different counties.

Director Raburn commented on his attendance at National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement workshops; new fare gates; additional Ambassadors on the trains; decertification of peace officers for misconduct and SB 731; and consideration of SB 731 for support at the next Board Meeting.

Director Saltzman commented on BART's progress; explained that her Roll Call for Introductions (RCI) request was related to the budget; her motivation to hold a joint meeting and support for another joint meeting; her recommendation for a BPCRB member to provide an update at one Board Meeting per month for the next few months; ensuring that BART Police Officers can focus on serious crimes, are available to do so, and receive support; the Ambassador program; openness to the outcome of the community process; and her appreciation of Chief Alvarez's openness to the Ambassador program and the community process.

Mr. Casimere and Chairperson Rizk gave closing remarks.

The Meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Patricia K. Williams
District Secretary