

**SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT**  
**BART ACCESSIBILITY TASK FORCE**  
Committee Meeting Minutes  
March 25, 2021

**1. Roll Call of Members:**

1. Alan Smith (2nd Vice-Chair)
2. Anita Ortega
3. Catherine Callahan
4. Chris Mullin – ABSENT
5. Clarence Fischer
6. Don Queen – ABSENT
7. Emily Witkin – ABSENT
8. Gerry Newell (Vice-Chair)
9. Hale Zukas – ABSENT
10. Herb Hastings
11. Janet Abelson
12. Janice Armigo Brown – ABSENT
13. Larry Bunn
14. Marjorie (Marji) McWee
15. Randall Glock (Chair)
16. Roland Wong
17. Valerie Buell
18. VACANT

**BART Customer Access and Accessibility Department Staff:**

Elena Van Loo  
Laura Timothy  
Bob Franklin

**BART Director(s), BART Staff, and members of the public:**

Robert Raburn, BART Board Director  
Officer Armando Sandoval (Staff)  
Jeffrey Lau (Staff)  
Javier Saavedra (Captioner)  
Mayra Perez (Captioner)  
Shay Roberson (Guest)  
Justina Victoriano (Guest)  
Aerin Watkins (Guest)

Joshua Saunders (Guest)  
Munya Mahiya (Guest)  
Sara Desumala (Guest)  
Shawn Castello (Guest)  
Sid (Guest)

## **2. Public Comments**

Shay Roberson introduced herself as a travel trainer and mentioned due to COVID-19, she found it difficult for her as a wheelchair user and a teacher for people with disabilities to be able to use the elevators. She shared an idea to work with BART in building ramps up to platform level so, if the elevators are closed, or are out of service for maintenance reasons, passengers would still have access to the platform levels.

Aerin Watkins agreed with what Shay Roberson said and added by having a ramp leading to the platform level, there will be less risk contracting COVID-19 by being in an open space instead of in an enclosed space.

Joshua Saunders shared that he noticed when he was traveling to San Francisco Downtown Stations, especially at Montgomery Station, passengers can only exit from one side of the station and the other side is completely blocked off. He mentioned he is visually impaired, and he had a difficult time navigating in and around the Montgomery BART Station. Due to COVID, there is less traffic and this is less of an issue but would like to know how long this will continue.

## **3. Approval of February 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Clarence Fischer moved approval of the February 25, 2021 meeting with the amended minutes. Gerry Newell seconded the motion.

- Motion passes with eleven (11) in favor, zero (0) against, one (1) abstention.

## **4. BART Ambassador Program**

Officer Armando Sandoval presented on the BART Ambassador Program. He works in the BART Police Department and shared he is now part of new Bureau Progressive Policing and Community Engagement Bureau Program that started about six month ago. One of the programs that he is implementing is the Ambassador Program.

The other programs that Officer Armando Sandoval will be supervising are as follows:

- Crisis Intervention Specialist Team
- Cops Unit
  - Community based Liaisons for the BART Police Department to connect with all the various community throughout the BART District

Officer Armando Sandoval went over what the Ambassador Program is about:

- The Ambassador is a team of ten individuals that pair up in two's
  - It operates 7 days/week.
- The Ambassadors are focused on twenty (20) stations
  - San Francisco and Alameda County
- The Ambassadors are visible to the public
  - Trained in active listening and communication
  - Trained in Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)
    - Engaging with folks in crisis, in distress, with mental health issues, and with individuals who are homeless or addicts.
- The Ambassadors remind riders to put their masks on and to follow the COVID protocols. If the riders do not have masks, one is provided
- Ambassadors provide customer services
  - Where the elevator, escalators, or stairs are located
- Ambassador's required uniform
  - Blue jacket with Polo shirt underneath
  - Utility pants
  - Officer walking shoes that are black

Officer Sandoval announced the Ambassador Program is growing and will expand to other counties within the BART system.

Herb Hasting asked Officer Sandoval if “Sensitivity Training” is provided and Officer Sandoval said “yes”. Herb Hasting shared there is “Sensitive Training,” for people who have developmental disabilities and would like to reach out to Officer Sandoval to help with training or to advice.

Randall Glock asked Officer Sandoval if the General Disability Awareness (GDA) pamphlet has been useful for the BART Police officers that was given to them a few years ago and Officer Sandoval stated the pamphlet have been helpful.

Valerie Buell also let Officer Sandoval know her agency can advise or assist in sensitive training. He also said there is more detailed information under [bart.gov](http://bart.gov).

## **5. Oakland Coliseum Vaccinations Site**

Jeffrey Lau gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Oakland Coliseum Vaccination Site. He shared that BART is a part of a regional collaboration and has provided facilities and parking lots for partners as COVID-19 community testing and vaccination sites.

### **Testing Sites at BART Stations:**

- 24th St/Mission
- West Oakland
- Coliseum
- Fruitvale
- Bay Fair
- Union City

### **Vaccination Sites:**

- Bay Fair BART Station (for one day)
- Metro Building
- Coliseum BART Station
- Fruitvale BART Station
- Antioch BART Station (being planned)

Jeffrey Lau went over Oakland Coliseum vaccination site:

- Free BART Tickets (\$7.00 value) for the ride back home after you get vaccinated at the Coliseum site
- Site Run by FEMA and Cal OES
- Approximately 2,000 free tickets handed out to riders
- Appointments are available for people with a high chance of exposure, high-risk, and those 65 or older. Sign up at [myturn.ca.gov](https://myturn.ca.gov) or call (833) 422-4255 to find out if it is your turn. If you are eligible, you can schedule an appointment, or register to be notified when one is available.
  - Or go to [www.Vaccinefinder.org](https://www.Vaccinefinder.org)

## **6. BART Updates Related to the Coronavirus**

Jeffrey Lau gave a PowerPoint presentation on BART Updates Related to the Coronavirus. Here are the District COVID-19 Response Protocols:

- Remote work where possible
- Social Distancing
  - Maintenance Shops
    - Staggered breaks
    - No face-to-face shift turn over
    - Job briefings – outside where possible, social distancing
    - N95 Masks required when more than one person in a vehicle together
  - Stations
    - Single Agent per booth
    - One person limit for breakrooms
  - Train Operators
    - Limited breakroom capacity
    - Identified alternative spaces for breaks and lunches
    - Disinfection and cleaning at high touch points multiple times per shift, inside trains daily, and in employee work areas
    - Started before it was a requirement
    - Fogging responsive to an incident occur in train cabs, employee break rooms, etc.
- Mandated mask wearing at work
- Education and training outreach

Jeffrey Lau went over face masks health orders:

- Bay Area Counties Shelter in Place/Face Covering Orders
- State Face Covering Guidance (Nov 20)
  - Exemptions
- CDC Face Mask Order for Public Transportation (Feb 21)
  - TSA Security Directive
- FTA Order
  - May take enforcement action
- US Executive Order
- CDC/Federal exemptions:
  - A child under the age of 2 years
  - A person with a disability who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask, for reasons related to the disability
  - A person for whom wearing a mask would create a risk to workplace health, safety, or job duty

- Can I wear a face shield instead of a mask?
  - Face shields do not fulfill the requirements of the Order. Face shields may be worn in addition to a mask that fulfills the requirements of the Order, but face shields may not be worn instead of a mask. Face shields do not protect others from respiratory droplets exhaled by the wearer.

Valerie Buell wanted to clarify what is acceptable and unacceptable regarding a respirator mask. She mentioned she has trouble breathing with a face mask on and she preferred the face shield so she can breathe easier but, if she puts a blue mask over the respirator mask, would that be allowed and the answer was “yes.”

Jeffrey Lau stated with the face shield, you would be complying with COVID-19 safety guidelines, which prevents respiratory droplets spreading and Clarence Fisher suggested to update face shields vs. face masks with the presentation given at this meeting.

Clarence Fischer wanted clarification if trains are being cleaned at the end of the lines for each trip or the trains being cleaned two to three times a day. Jeffrey Lau believes the trains are being cleaned at the end of the line stations.

## **7. BATF Term Limits: Chair, Vice Chair, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Chair, and Members**

Gerry Newell Led BATF Term Limits: Chair, Vice Chair, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Chair, and Members.

Gerry Newell wanted to share why he brought this agenda item up. He wanted to look at giving everybody an equal opportunity to serve as a chair, vice chair, or second vice chair in term limits because new blood is always good. He added there are several models out there from other advisory committees and reached out to staff and asked them for some of the languages.

Gerry Newell asked Bob Franklin to read the three different ways other committees look when it comes to term limits:

- The BATF Current Model: One year term. No limits.
- Alternatives:
  1. The Muni Model: Three Year Limit, One Year Break
    - No Officer may serve in the same position for more than two years in a row.

- No Officer may serve as any officer for more than three years in a row.
- After three years, an officer may run for another term after a 1 year absence.

Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC)

2. The Paratransit Model: Two Year Limit Per Position

- No Officer may serve in the same position for more than two years in a row.

Service Review Advisory Committee (SRAC)

Alan Smith expressed the current bylaws has been working well. He became an officer, and a vice chair, then a chair, and he was off a couple of years. He stated that everyone has a chance to nominate anybody in the group and anyone can nominate themselves. He has nominated others who declined to run. He thinks the system has not been broken and he is in favor of continuing the bylaws we have.

Valerie Buell stated she is leery of the proposal and a governing body that is insular is not an effective one. It can become stagnant and limit innovative thinking and if there should be term limits but, it should be for the whole body and not one or two positions. She added it should include term limits for membership too. She does not see a lot from this group when it comes to recruiting to attend the meeting. She added, right now, she would not choose to change the term limits.

Herb Hastings agreed with Valerie Buell's comments but added there needs to be better communication between Officers and BART Staff.

Clarence Fischer thinks that the current bylaws are good but, what happens if one of the positions is open and no one else runs for it. What happens then? He said not everyone is a leader in our group and when you run for an Office, you really need to have leadership.

Roland Wong stated he has served on several committees in the Bay Area and it seems to work well with new, fresh blood and it is important the chair communicate with staff. He said having the term limits is good for people to take a break and let other members have a shot as an officer.

Randall Glock said that he echoes the members comments. He mentioned everybody is given the opportunity to run as a chair and one of the big challenges with that is we have some really good people that make great chairs. He added sometimes lives, careers, and personal reasons are why members do not want to run. He said he is not in favor how this agenda item was presented.

Marjorie (Marji) McWee applauded Gerry Newell for bringing this agenda item up and stated it is good from time to time to think about how committees govern themselves. She said allowing for rotation of the chairs brings new ways to engage people. She said she does not know why people do not always rise up to leadership, that it can be the group dynamics, or they do not feel comfortable, or they do not think they can change the dynamics. She added if you have a change in leadership, you allow for people to aspire to become more engaged and participate fully. She supports the idea to see how things may shift.

Gerry Newell motioned to have term limits and Marjorie (Marji) McWee seconded the motion.

Randall Glock said there is a first and a second and this agenda item is open for discussion and Gerry Newell asked if there was any additional discussion.

Alan Smith thinks the motion has not been defined because Gerry Newell did not define the amount of the term limits.

Gerry Newell said we would have term limits for chair, vice chair, and second vice chair. Two years per each chair and the model he liked was the Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC).

Valerie Buell wanted to make sure she understood if we are voting on both the term limits and which term limits at the same time, or is that going to be two separate votes on whether or not we have term limits, and then if enough people say, "yes," and win that, then we are going to vote on that kind of term limits they are or maybe come up with a plan of our own. She would like clarification so, the members understand what is actually being voted on.

Gerry Newell felt members need to vote on term limits first, and if that passes, then members vote on term lengths.

Clarence Fischer was concerned that was not brought up was what if a current officer did their two years commitment and no one else runs, then what do we do? He felt there is a missing link to the term limits.

Roland Wong stated if there are no nominations for a particular position, the current chair can continue running after two years. He wanted to share that the whole point with term limits point is to get new leadership. He is in favor of the term limits and favors Multimodal Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC) bylaws.



Marjorie (Marji) McWee said we need two separate motions. First motion is the idea of term limits and the second motion would be contemplating the structure of the how the term limits would be implemented.

Gerry Newell agreed with Marjorie (Marji) McWee's comment by going for the first motion that we have term limits.

Gerry Newell said he will remove the first motion from the table and stated the amended motion to have term limits on Chair, Vice Chair, and Second Vice Chair. Marjorie (Marji) McWee seconded the motion.

Elena Van Loo did the roll call:

- Motion does not pass with eight (8) in favor, three (3) against, one (1) abstention.

For clarification, Bob Franklin let members know there are twelve (12) members present and we need nine (9) votes to pass to change the bylaws.

Randall Glock confirmed with members the motion did not pass at this point.

## **8. Member Announcements**

No member announcements

## **9. Staff Announcements**

As Bob Franklin and Robert Raburn have already mentioned, Elena Van Loo congratulated Larry Bunn on becoming an official member as of this morning which passed unanimously with the BART Board of Directors.

Elena Van Loo informed members she will be reaching out as a reminder that Ethics Training will be through Zoom on April 06, 2021.

Bob Franklin shared he is planning to go to the Board of Directors next month about some changes to the advisory committees and one of them is to expand the boundaries for membership eligibility.

## **10. Chairperson Announcements**

Randall Glock mentioned he is noticing more people starting to travel on BART and shared if you are traveling, make sure you feel safe. He added to continue to wear your masks and follow the COVID-19 safety protocols.

Randall Glock shared there are a couple of constructions happening at BART stations: El Cerrito del Norte BART Station, which looks nice, and the Union City BART Station.

## **11. Future Agenda Topics – Members Suggest Topics**

Valerie Buell proposed is to have more discussions on agenda items to brainstorm instead of just presentations.

Members suggested future agenda items:

- A Station Agent was added at the Antioch BART Station – What prompted BART to do this?
- Sharpe Containers at BART Stations
- New bike racks in the Fleet of the Future (FOF) – Update
- Ramp between the street and platform levels – If Elevator Not in Service
- Fleet of the Future (FOF) – How Long it Takes to make new vehicles

Elena Van Loo shared the draft agenda for April 22, 2021:

- FY22 BART Primary Budget
- Concord Modernization – New Elevator at Concord BART Station
- Scooter: Updates and Accessibility

## **12. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:45 pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting, **April 22, 2021.**