

From: [Mchugh, Eileen \(BOS\)](#)
To: [Young, Victor \(BOS\)](#)
Subject: FW: PUBLIC COMMENT BOS AGENDA ITEM 24, REAPPOINTMENT OF GWYNETH BORDEN TO MTA BOARD BOS MEETING March 22, 2022
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From: Mary Miles <page364@earthlink.net>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 6:26 PM
To: Board of Supervisors, (BOS) <board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org>
Subject: PUBLIC COMMENT BOS AGENDA ITEM 24, REAPPOINTMENT OF GWYNETH BORDEN TO MTA BOARD BOS MEETING March 22, 2022

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FROM:
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TO:
Angela Calvillo Board Secretary; and
Members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors
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DATE: March 21, 2022

PUBLIC COMMENT, March 22, 2022 BOARD AGENDA, Item 24, [Mayoral Reappointment, Municipal Transportation Agency Board of Directors -Gwyneth Borden]

This is public comment opposing the reappointment of Gwyneth Borden to the Board of Directors of the Municipal Transportation Agency ("MTA").

The MTA Board's seven directors control a budget of more than one billion dollars per year, including the \$1.28 billion) Operating Budget plus a \$359.8 million Capital Budget for fiscal year 2021/22. (https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/reports-and-documents/2020/06/6-30-20_item_9_fy21_and_fy22_budget.pdf.)

The San Francisco Charter specifies that each MTA Director "must possess significant knowledge of, or professional experience in one or more of the fields of government, finance, or labor relations." Further, at least four of the directors "must be regular riders of the Municipal Railway, and must continue to be regular riders during their terms." At least two directors "must possess significant knowledge of, or professional experience in, the field of public transportation." During their terms, all of the directors "shall be required to ride the Municipal Railway on the average once a week." (SF Charter sec. 8A.102(a).)

There is no evidence that Ms. Borden meets these requirements. Ms. Borden's background shows no experience in transportation. Her most recent Form 700 dated March 30, 2021, shows investments of \$100,000 to \$1,000,000 in her husband's painting business, and another \$100,000 to \$1,000,000 in her private consultant firm. She also receives a stipend for sitting on the Community Advisory Board of Wells Fargo Bank.

While her business enterprises may yield significant income, they are unrelated to transportation. Nor does her experience reflect the transportation needs of Muni riders or the traveling public in San Francisco.

Ms. Borden's resume shows no "significant knowledge of, or professional experience...in the field of public transportation." There is no indication that in her eight years on MTA Board she rode the Municipal Railway "on the average of once a week." (SF Charter sec. 8A.102(a).)

The MTA Board, with Ms. Borden's eight-year tenure as both President and a voting member, has failed to deliver any reality-based solution to its own mismanagement of San Francisco's Transportation Agency that has more than 6,000 full-time staff whose salaries exceed those of any comparably-sized city in the United States.

Not once has Ms. Borden acknowledged the travel mode choice of the vast majority of San Francisco travelers, which is by motor vehicle. (<https://www.sfmta.com/blog/sfmta-travel-decision-survey-2019>.) Instead, the MTA Board has, during her eight years on that Board, allocated the MTA's annual millions for "capital projects" that work against drivers, removing vehicle lanes, street parking and reducing street capacity. Instead of prudently staffing the Muni operating system that has lower ridership, MTA now has a bloated *office* staff of thousands of six-figure "engineers," "planners" and "public relations" propagandists for bicycling.

As one example of her disdain for the public, in the March 10, 2022 MTA Board special meeting on its proposed permanent closure of Golden Gate Park streets, Ms. Borden ridiculed speakers, including the disabled, seniors, family representatives, and others who voiced dissent on that project. Ms. Borden stated with reference to "countless numbers of e-mails and petitions and phone calls," that "what struck me sometimes listening to this hearing that sometimes I thought we were proposing a toxic waste dump the way those refer to this project," and it was "a little bit hard to wrap my head around how people felt such hatred toward the idea of keeping the park closed to cars." (SFGTV video of March 10, 2022 Special Meeting of MTA Board and Recreation and Parks Commission.)

In short, Ms. Borden made clear that she did *not* listen to or take seriously the public's concerns but instead summarily dismissed them to proselytize for her already-made decision to permanently shut them out of Golden Gate Park.

Even if Ms. Borden is deemed qualified, this Board should limit all MTA Directors to two terms, particularly since the MTA continues to operate in contravention of the City's Charter and the public's real transportation choices and interest.

Although the City Charter requires that MUNI provide 85% on-time performance, it has never done so, including during the eight years of Ms. Borden's tenure on the MTA Board. In fact, after the millions spent on closing public streets, and removing traffic lanes and street parking to create bicycle "improvements," MTA's performance has actually *declined* during her tenure:

2012: 59%;

2013: 57.4%;

2014: 60.2%;
2015: 57.5%;
2016: 54.3%;
2017: 54.3%
2018-2019: 54.3%
2020-2021: 48.9%
2021-2022: 48.8%

(See MTA, March 1, 2022: <https://www.sfmta.com/reports/muni-time-performance#:~:text=Muni%20on%2Dtime%20performance%20is,departures%2C%20reported%20system%2Dwide>)

With 2022 ridership at less than 50% of pre-covid ridership, MTA claims it now needs *another* huge public bond expenditure to staff buses that even with severe service cuts deliver on-time service only 48.8% of the time.

MTA needs oversight by a Board of Directors with expertise in public *transportation* and service to the needs of the traveling public. Instead, Ms. Borden has supported that agency's disproportionate focus on bicycles and anti-carism, and closing public streets to the many travelers who choose to drive. According to MTA's data, the vast majority of travelers choose to drive, while bicyclists comprise less than 2% of all travelers in San Francisco. (<https://www.sfmta.com/blog/sfmta-travel-decision-survey-2019>; Matier: "What's white, male and 5 feet wide? Bay Area's bike lanes, San Francisco Chronicle, 2/26/20.)

Ms. Borden's eight-years of neglecting the interests of San Francisco travelers must end.

The MTA Board needs Directors who serve the majority of San Francisco travelers who choose to travel by motor vehicles or transit. It must stop spending hundreds of millions to make their travel slower and more miserable, making parking more expensive and difficult, and closing public streets, while lavishing millions on bicycle "improvements" for the 2% mode share of bicyclists in San Francisco.

It is time for this Board to pay attention to the public's real needs, which the present MTA Board has not done. Please reject the proposed reappointment of Ms. Borden to the MTA Board.

Mary Miles