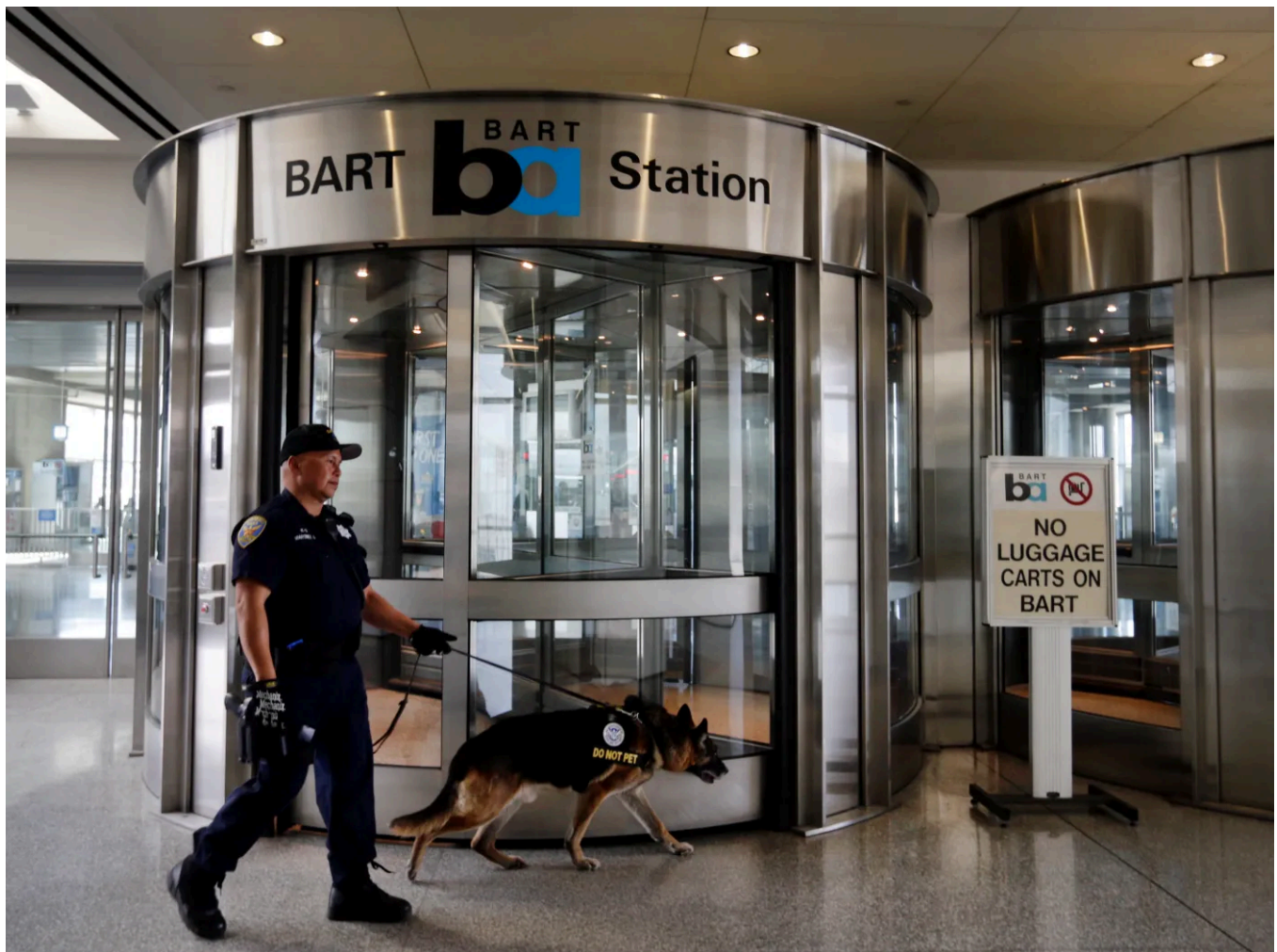


NEWS > TRANSPORTATION

Board directors to police: Increase transparency about crimes on BART





By **ERIN BALDASSARI** | Bay Area News Group

PUBLISHED: July 11, 2017 at 6:45 AM PDT | UPDATED: July 14, 2017 at 4:49 PM PDT



Listen to this article now

Powered by **Trinity Audio**



1.0x

00:00

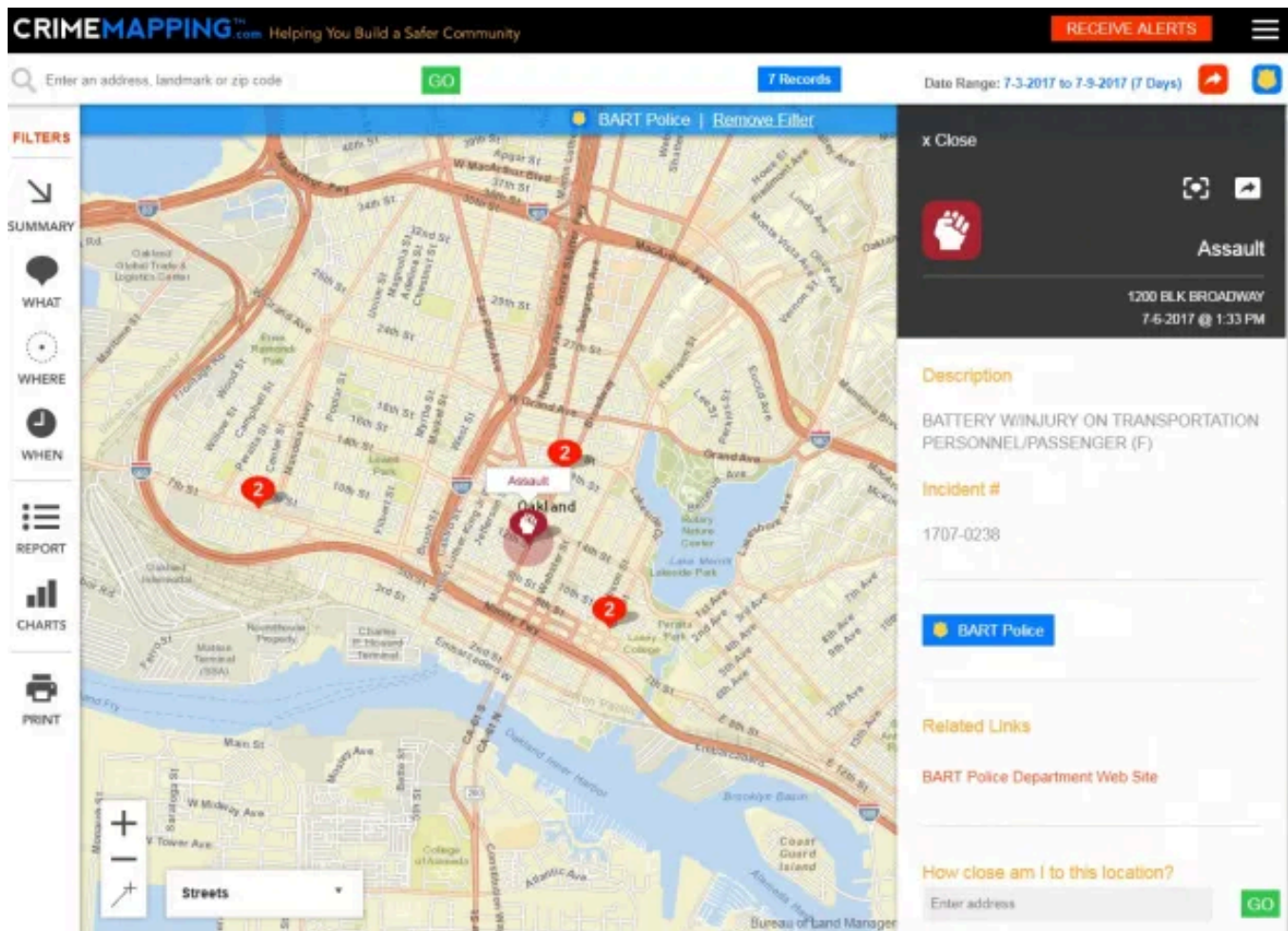
05:40

OAKLAND — At least two BART board directors are blasting the agency for not doing enough to inform the public about recent robberies on the system.

The criticism comes in the wake of three robberies and assaults involving groups of minors snatching cell phones from patrons and follows [a recent shift](#) to how the department reports crimes to the public. The agency had, until early June, issued daily reports on police calls at BART, providing a narrative description of the report and the department's response to anyone who signed up to receive those emails.

But that all changed once BART police Chief Carlos Rojas [assumed control](#) of the department in late May. One of his first decisions was to use the free online tool, [CrimeMapping.com](#), which provides real-time information about calls coming to the department, said Taylor Huckaby, a BART spokesman. That tool allows users to view reports of crime, but does not provide any narrative of what transpired during a particular incident, nor does it provide an alert for people riding the trains at the time.

"He pitched the idea that it was a modern tool used by other departments in the area. ... It generates charts and graphs and would show data over time," Huckaby said. "He felt that was a better solution to publicly report crime on BART than a curated list."



BART has begun using an online mapping tool, rather than narrative descriptions, to report crime to the public.

The lack of details and somewhat cumbersome software makes it difficult for patrons to figure out what actually happened, said Debora Allen, a BART board director. She struggled to figure out how to isolate crimes on BART from the other agencies using the software, including Oakland, San Francisco, Berkeley, Hayward and Richmond police departments, among others.

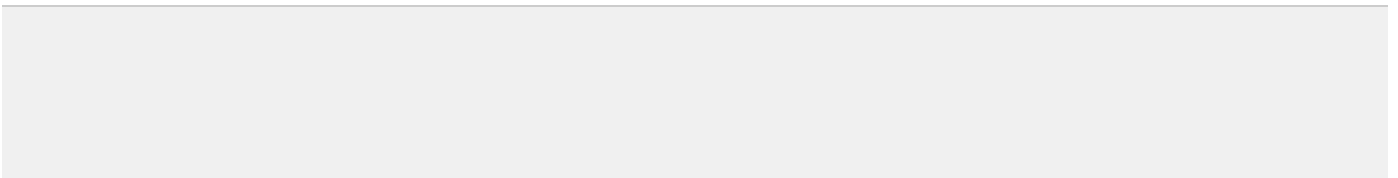
“People need to be aware of what’s happening on the trains,” Allen said.

Both Allen and BART Director Joel Keller, who heads the board’s Operations, Safety and Workforce Committee, said they’ll be pressing the department to release more information to the public, including videos of the recent robberies. BART has so far refused to release the footage.

tensions and make the department look racially biased. She described the social media reaction to the April robbery at the Coliseum station as “startling in the level of racial profiling” it prompted.

“The general manager got a call about the incident on her voicemail that used racist and incendiary language that made my mouth drop,” Hamill wrote. “Many posts used patently offensive language that often involved racial slurs (no news articles ever referenced the race of the offenders yet some members of the public leapt [sic] to their own conclusions).”

Allen acknowledged the agency has legitimate concerns when it comes to the issue of real or perceived racial profiling, either by police or the public. But Keller said the new way of reporting crimes is “very disappointing,” and questioned whether the agency couldn’t release the videos with faces blurred so the public could see the patterns of behavior and better protect themselves.





BART Police Daily Log Email Updates

Sexual Battery – Lake Merritt Station

6/3/2017 2232 hours An officer responded to the station agent's booth to meet with a female victim who reported a male subject who had off-boarded from a train had reached under her skirt to grab her buttocks. The female described the person as being a Black male adult, 6', medium build, with a short buzz cut, wearing a light blue t-shirt and dark jeans. The male suspect fled out of the station via the 8th Street stairwell. An area check was conducted and the suspect was not located. L15 1706-0171

Possession for sales of narcotics/Possession of a dirk or dagger/Resisting arrest (Prohibition order issued) – Civic Center Station

6/3/2017 2044 hours Two officers were conducting a patrol check of the 8th Street/Market Street stairwell due to high drug activity when they observed a Hispanic male subject holding a plastic sandwich bag. When the male subject saw the officers, he took off running topside. The officers chased after him and eventually located him nearby trying to change his clothing. The officers contacted him and found he was attempting to swallow individually packaged cocaine and heroin. After taking the male into custody, the officers located a fix blade knife concealed in his waistband. The male was transported and booked into San Francisco County jail. L15 1706-0164

Battery on a transit passenger/Resisting arrest (Prohibition order issued) – MacArthur Station

6/3/2017 1955 hours An officer and a sergeant were conducting a patrol check of the platform at the station when they observed a male subject who appeared to be looking for his dropped cellular telephone. When the officers went to assist, another passenger directed them to another male who reportedly slapped the phone out of the hand of the male they had seen looking for his phone on the platform. The officers went to detain the male subject who initially didn't comply with their verbal commands and in fact threw suspected marijuana onto the nearby escalator. When the officer and sergeant grabbed onto his arms, he physically resisted their attempts to place him into handcuffs. The officers pulled the male onto the ground and eventually secured him in handcuffs. Once handcuffed, the subject stopped physically resisting and the officers were able to conduct their investigation. The officers determined the male had battered the other passenger who wished to place him under arrest for the battery. The male subject was transported and booked into Glenn Dyer jail. 1706-0162 L15

Public intoxication/Resisting arrest/Battery on a police officer (Prohibition order issued) – West Oakland Station

6/3/2017 1814 hours Officers intercepted a Dublin/Pleasanton bound train at the West Oakland station after someone reported a Hispanic male creating a disturbance on the train. When the train arrived, passengers flagged down the officer and directed him to the male. The officer determined the male subject was intoxicated and unable to care for himself. The male subject was taken into custody and placed into the back seat of a patrol vehicle. While seated in the back seat, the male subject was able to maneuver the handcuffs to the front of his body. When officers attempted to remove him from the vehicle to handcuff him behind his back, the subject began to fight with the officers. An officer was punched in the face by the subject and several other officers who were on scene assisted in controlling the male subject. The officers and the sergeant who were on scene eventually placed the male subject onto the ground and used force to secure him in the WRAP device. The subject was transported and booked into Santa Rita jail. 1706-0159 L15

BART police stopped sending narrative reports of crime in June. This is a sample of one incident log from June 4.

"We aren't being very transparent," Keller said. "If a rider reads these stories and sees it on television, they ought to be able understand what occurred so they can take