

01/28/2021 Board of Directors Meeting
Public Comment Submissions

Submissions

Transportation Choices 2
Joe Kunzler 2

Transportation Choices

Dear members of the Sound Transit Board,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes to the Board Rules and Operating Procedures. We generally support the changes to discourage personal attacks and hate speech.

We highly recommend you further amend the operating procedures to indicate the process for public comment by phone and video, and the intent to continue to allow this type of participation in the future. This is a critical equity, transparency, and accountability issue for those who are unable to physically make it to the Sound Transit Board meeting after the COVID emergency has passed -- for any reason, whether illness, disability, or emergency. The procedures should also indicate how and when written public comments for each meeting will be made available to the public.

Thank you again for taking up this important matter.

Sincerely,
Kelsey Mesher

Kelsey Mesher
Advocacy Director

Transportation Choices
1402 3rd Ave #310
Seattle, WA 98101

Joe Kunzler

**** An attachment was submitted with the public comment, and is included for review below.**

27 January 2021

RE: [Resolution No. R2021-01](#), Sound Transit Board Rules

Dear Sound Transit Board;

I, Joe. A. Kunzler commend you and staff for proposing [Resolution No. R2021-01](#) for Board approval. I clearly disapprove of previous malicious public comments aimed at Boardmembers, staff and others - especially as documented in [Tackling Tsimerman](#) - and believe R2021-01 *if enforced* will curb that. The problem is - and this letter is broken into congruent sections along these lines - that the enforcement of Sound Transit public comment rules in the past has been inconsistent and the rules do not *retain* increased accessibility and reduced emissions from online meetings. I ask you please pass [Resolution No. R2021-01](#) *and* schedule a debate about remaining in online meetings.

Some Thoughts on Holocaust Memorial Day & *Appeasing* Alex Tsimerman

As to passing R2021-01, Sound Transit has as a value, "INCLUSION & RESPECT: We foster a culture where everyone is treated fairly and where diverse perspectives are welcomed and every voice is heard." Appeasing a hater in Alex Tsimerman is definitely *not in compliance* with this value. It is also a moral imperative on that note to remind you that today, 27 January 2021, is International Holocaust Memorial Day.

Especially considering that Alex Tsimerman has brought the rhetoric and physical gestures of Nazism to Sound Transit's Boardroom. So I hope as to enforcement going forward Boardmembers understand appeasing Alex Tsimerman means their name will forever be tied to his with a cord of steel for all of history.

But if you find the courage to pass & enforce these Board rules, then you too will as per [Tackling Tsimerman](#); be like Seattle City Hall and become a beacon of hope and resistance to Tsimerman's bullying. As Seattle Council President Gonzalez [tweeted out today](#) on Holocaust Memorial Day, "We've witnessed how hate and fear of others can lead societies down a slippery slope towards authoritarianism, fascism, and genocide. It's incumbent on all of us to recall the history and learn the lessons of the Holocaust in order to ensure a safe, free, and unified world."

I cannot help but add what my friend British Columbia Minister of State for Infrastructure (TransLink) Bowinn Ma [said today on Instagram](#), "On International Holocaust Remembrance Day, we are reminded of what happens when we do nothing or stay silent in the face of hate." Indeed.

Let me also [quote our US President Joe Biden from his statement](#) about today,

The horrors we saw and heard in Charlottesville in 2017, with white nationalists and neo-Nazi spewing the same anti-Semitic bile we heard in the 1930s in Europe, are the reason I ran for president. Today, I recommit to the simple truth that preventing future genocides remains both our moral duty and a matter of national and global importance.

The Holocaust was no accident of history. It occurred because too many governments cold-bloodedly adopted and implemented hate-fueled laws, policies, and practices to vilify and dehumanize entire groups of people, and too many individuals stood by silently. Silence is complicity. As my late friend and Holocaust survivor Tom Lantos so frequently reminded us: "The veneer of civilization is paper thin. We are its guardians, and we can never rest."

When hatred goes unchecked, and when the checks and balances in government and society that protect fundamental freedoms are lost, violence and mass atrocities can result.

Furthermore, out of genuine fear of how far Alex Tsimerman may go; I put Sound Transit on notice that I have advised and continue to advise TransLink & Community Transit leaders of developments. Sound Transit staff should be able to relocate *away* from Tsimerman's bullying. The fact Mr. "Go Sound Transit" is doing *this* should shake Boardmembers' and CEO's consciences.

Finally, because I'm frustrated that defeating Alex Tsimerman has become a moral imperative overtaking my efforts to help build back better transit; please let me quote Congressman Adam

Schiff with "[BREAKING: Midnight in Washington](#)" replaying in my headphones: "America also believes there is a difference between right and wrong and right matters here. But there is more. Truth matters, right matters, but so does decency. Decency matters." That means enforcing these new Board Rules, not just passing them today please. *Thank you.*

Online Meetings Post-Pandemic Please

Moving forward, one thing the Sound Transit Board may wish to consider to create that aforementioned miracle and have other positive impacts is please remain in online meetings post-pandemic. Online meetings also limit greenhouse gas emissions as per RCW 70.235.005 (3) which states, "It is the intent of the legislature that the state will: ... (c) reduce emissions at the lowest cost to Washington's economy, consumers, and businesses." Clearly reducing the need for the public, Board Members and staff to commute to/from afternoon Sound Transit Board functions *is* reducing CO2 emissions.

Furthermore the "Ride the Wave" brand of Sound Transit includes, "For our customers and potential customers, it means riding the wave of the future with state-of-the-art transit and taking back freedom: freedom from traffic, freedom from stress, and freedom from the high cost of driving. For ST staff, it means riding the wave of innovation and freeing ourselves to be cutting edge and think outside the bus...or box!" The Board remaining in online meetings post-pandemic to reduce emissions *is*, "Riding the wave of innovation and freeing ourselves to be cutting edge" to take back freedom.

Conclusion

I also know that between Covid19, ST3 realignment and a climate crisis 2021 is a crossroads in Sound Transit's history; and I sincerely want to help you choose the correct path forward to help build back better to ride the wave to win the battle for the soul of America and yes, Sound Transit too. Whenever Sound Transit has departed from the values of Sound Transit; Sound Transit has come to regret it and that regret is written all over the pages of Sound Transit's history. But even now I believe in the promise of Sound Transit so much that I am speaking up to ensure the voices of my friends & I are heard to help Sound Transit build back better.

Very respectfully;

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Joe A. Kunzler, American and a 12 for Transit

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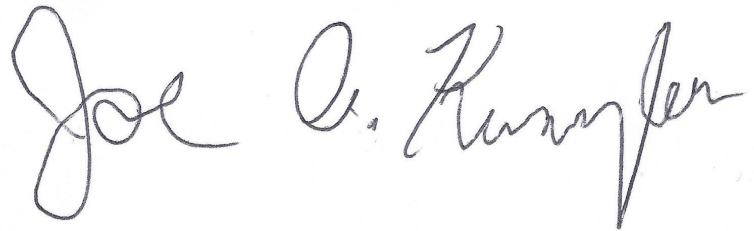
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