

## Man steals iPhone while getting off a bus

Written by Staff Reports  
Friday, 28 April 2023 05:56

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A man stole a Navajo Transit worker's phone and is now facing charges of larceny, criminal trespassing, and tampering with evidence.

On March 29, around 1:45 pm, Gallup Police Officer Aaron Marquez was dispatched to the Walmart at 1650 W. Maloney Ave. after a Navajo Transit bus driver called Metro Dispatch and said a man, who was later identified as Raymond Metteba Jr., stole his phone.

When Marquez arrived at the scene he met with the bus driver, who explained that he arrived at the Walmart bus stop about 15 minutes ago. While people were getting on the bus, Metteba stepped on and told him that the bus's back tire was leaking air.

The bus driver got off the bus to check out the tire, and that's when he saw Metteba reportedly get on the bus and then almost immediately get back off it.

When the bus driver got back on the bus, his phone was allegedly missing. A passenger reportedly told him that the man who had told him about the tire had taken something from the front of the bus and then took off.

The phone was a black iPhone 13, and the driver said it would cost about \$1,000 to replace.

Metteba was reportedly last seen going into the Walmart and heading to the Auto Motive area. According to his report, Marquez went into the store, but he was unable to find Metteba. He did

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speak to the store's manager, however, and after the manager looked at the store's surveillance video of Metteba walking into the store he confirmed that he recognized Metteba and he said he wasn't allowed in the store.

When he walked out of the store, Marquez met the supervisor of the bus station, who said she saw Metteba walking through the Home Depot parking lot heading toward the mall.

Marquez drove to the northwest entrance of the mall and found a man who was wearing black pants and a Denver Broncos sweatshirt. Based on the victim's description, Marquez identified the man as Metteba.

When Metteba made eye contact with Marquez, his eyes reportedly widened and he took off running in the mall. Security was able to apprehend him though, and Marquez caught up to find them pointing tasers at Metteba.

Marquez placed Metteba in handcuffs and searched him for a phone, but Metteba said he didn't have a phone on him, and Marquez didn't find one.

After he was placed in a police vehicle, Metteba continued to say he didn't have a phone. After a while he did say that he'd left the phone in either the Home Depot or mall restroom. He admitted to grabbing the bus driver's phone. He said he didn't know why he did it and that he was "stupid."

Officers searched both restrooms and did not find the phone. They also searched the surrounding area without finding the phone.

Metteba continued to claim that the phone was in one of the two restrooms. He was arrested and charged with the aforementioned charges. His preliminary hearing is scheduled for May 3.

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