



AGENDA

**CITIZENS ADVISORY NETWORK
REGULAR MEETING
Monday March 25, 2024 6:00 p.m.
Benton Franklin Transit Administration Building, 2nd Floor Meeting Room
1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland WA**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88161679988?pwd=fxrppdq7U7NCfNysoYymMxYiXmfUTu.1>

Meeting ID: 881 6167 9988

Passcode: 155544

Dial In: (253) 215 8782 or (888) 788 0099 US Toll-free

CAN Meeting Agenda, Meeting Minutes and archived Zooms will be available at:
[Citizens Advisory Network - Board Information | Ben Franklin Transit \(bft.org\)](#)

1. CONVENE CAN MEETING

Chair, Ed Frost

Convened at:

2. ROLL CALL

Secretary / Recorder, Dennis Kreutz

Representing	Attendee Name	Title	Status
Citizen Advisory Network	Ed Frost	Chair	
Citizen Advisory Network	Dori Luzzo-Gilmour	Vice Chair / Recruitment Chair	
Citizen Advisory Network	Dennis Kreutz	Recording Secretary	
Citizen Advisory Network	Frank Cuta	Member	
Citizen Advisory Network	Bernie Vinther	Member	
Citizen Advisory Network	Laurie Price	Member	
Citizen Advisory Network	Mathew Howie	Member	
Citizen Advisory Network	Nayeli Aranda	Member	
Citizen Advisory Network	Brooklyn Hufstader	Member	
Citizen Advisory Network	Ulises Navarro	Member	
Citizen Advisory Network	Vanessa Pruitt	Member	
BFT Staff	Janet Brett	Manager of Communications	
BFT Staff	Kevin Sliger	Chief Planning & Development	
BFT Staff			

3. COMMENTS BY GUESTS:

Chair, Ed Frost

4. MINUTES FEBRUARY 2024 MEETING APPROVAL: Chair, Ed Frost

Discussion:

Motion to Approve the Minutes by:

Second to Approve the Minutes by:

Minutes Approved unanimously by a Voice Vote of the CAN Members: YES NO

5. OLD BUSINESS:

Chair, Ed Frost

6. NEW BUSINESS:

Chair, Ed Frost

A. Report of the March BFT Board of Directors Meeting.

CAN Member: Mathew Howie

B. Kevin Sliger stated that BFT is neutral at the moment as to whether Veterans Passes should be issued for both DAR and Coach riders. BFT would like a recommendation from CAN regarding this issue.

CAN ACTION: Members discuss CAN Recommendation:

C. See February Meeting Minutes Item 6.C.

BFT ACTION: The results of Finance Department Fare Impact actual costs will be presented to CAN in the March CAN Meeting.

CAN Member Discussion:

D. In the February CAN Meeting BFT Imelda Collop presented information regarding new rollout of Audio.

ACTION BY BFT - Imelda Collop stated that she will send an email with BFT's goals and information for Audio Instruction Rollout on what is being provided.

ACTION BY BFT – Imelda Collop with report back regarding availability of audio feedback on the Transit App.

CAN Members Discussion:

E. Discuss whether Citizen Advisory Network should become more involved in educating citizens about Washington Initiative 2117 (Repeal sections of the 2021 Climate Commitment Act so that Carbon Tax Credits are not collected) which if enacted would result in a loss of approximately \$7M in funding per year to BFT for Paratransit services.

CAN ACTION: Dori will do additional research and distribute it prior to the next CAN Meeting, for discussion in that meeting.

BFT ACTION: Kevin Sliger will make sure that CAN will receive a BFT Presentation in 1-2 months regarding the quantified information that BFT has put together regarding the potential impact of the loss of the funds.

F. Assign CAN Member to attend BFT Board Meeting in April.

CAN Member Assigned:

7. BFT BOARD / BFT STAFF COMMENTS:

8. CAN MEMBER COMMENTS:

9. OTHER:

10. NEXT MEETING:

A. Regular CAN Meeting Monday April 22, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair, Ed Frost

A. Meeting adjourned at:

MINUTES

CITIZENS ADVISORY NETWORK REGULAR MEETING

Monday February 26, 2024 6:00 p.m.

Benton Franklin Transit Administration Building, 2nd Floor Meeting Room
1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland WA

NOTE: Due to construction at BFT Columbia Park Trail facility the February CAN Meeting will be held at the Three Rivers Transit Center in the Conference Room.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88161679988?pwd=fxrppdq7U7NCfNysoYymMxYiXmfUTu.1>

Meeting ID: 881 6167 9988

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1. CONVENE CAN MEETING

Vice-Chair, Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

Convened at: 6:00 PM

2. ROLL CALL

Secretary / Recorder, Dennis Kreutz

Representing	Attendee Name	Title	Status
Citizen Advisory Network	Ed Frost	Chair	Excused
Citizen Advisory Network	Dori Luzzo-Gilmour	Vice Chair / Recruitment Chair	Present
Citizen Advisory Network	Dennis Kreutz	Recording Secretary	Present
Citizen Advisory Network	Frank Cuta	Member	Present
Citizen Advisory Network	Bernie Vinther	Member	Present
Citizen Advisory Network	Laurie Price	Member	Present
Citizen Advisory Network	Mathew Howie	Member	Present
Citizen Advisory Network	Nayeli Aranda	Member	Zoom
Citizen Advisory Network	Brooklyn Hufstader	Member	Present
Citizen Advisory Network	Ulises Navarro	Member	Present
Citizen Advisory Network	Vanessa Pruitt	Member	Excused
BFT Staff	Janet Brett	Manager of Communications	Present
BFT Staff	Kevin Sliger	Chief Planning & Development	Present
BFT Staff	David	Planning Manager	Present
BFT Staff	Bill Barlow	Planning Manager	Present
BFT Staff	Imelda Collop	Planning Development	Present

3. COMMENTS BY GUESTS:

Vice-Chair, Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

4. MINUTES OF JANUARY 2024 MEETING APPROVAL: Vice-Chair, Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

Discussion: Correct Minutes to reflect correct date of January 2024.

Motion to Approve the Minutes by: Frank Cuta

Second to Approve the Minutes by: Dennis Kreutz

Minutes Approved unanimously by a Voice Vote of the CAN Members: YES

5. OLD BUSINESS:

Vice-Chair, Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

None

6. NEW BUSINESS:

Vice-Chair, Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

A. Report of the February BFT Board of Directors Meeting.

By CAN Member: Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

CAN Recommendation 2024-01 (Public Comments Via Zoom Be Allowed) to BFT Management and Board were sent to both prior to February Board Meeting, copies provided to both at the Board Meeting, and were read to the Board and Public during the Board Meeting by Dori Luzzo-Gilmour.

See Attachment A below.

CAN Recommendation 2024-02 (Public Comments On Board Agenda Only) to BFT Management and Board were sent to both prior to February Board Meeting, copies provided to both at the Board Meeting, and were read to the Board and Public during the Board Meeting by Dori Luzzo-Gilmour.

See Attachment B below.

Dori expressed to the Board that CAN is the representative body for Riders and Citizens to express concerns and we there to represent the Riders, Teachers, Parents, Visually Impaired etc.

CAN Discussion:

There is concern that the Board is not going to consider the CAN Recommendations. Dori pointed out that it is the responsibility of the CAN to advise the Board of the concerns raised by citizens and we should follow up in the next Board meeting regarding the two Recommendations.

CAN ACTION: See CAN COMMENTS Item 8.D below.

B. During the January BFT Board of Directors Meeting the subject of allowing US Military Veterans to have BFT Transit Passes for all Services was brought up but no discussion.

Currently BFT Veteran Passes allow them to ride Fixed Route buses free.

This allows them to use VIA Connect non-ADA services for free.

- a. Discuss if CAN should recommend to BFT that Veteran Passes also allow free use of BFT DAR and Via Connect ADA services, based upon the rider's eligibility.

CAN Discussed that it would be a good thing to allow Veterans to have Zero Cost passes for eligible rides on all BFT Services.

It was suggested that a new Category be implemented, **Honored Citizens**, that could encompass additional persons than just Veterans. If the CAN agrees, this would be presented to BFT as a CAN Recommendation after further discussion.

BFT Kevin Sliger stated that BFT Financial Department is in the process of determining how many anticipated Veterans Passes would be used. This information will be provided to CAN when completed. He pointed out that if there were free passes for Veterans then another Public Comment Period and Fare Analysis would need to take place prior to making the Recommendation to the Board.

He stated that BFT is neutral at the moment as to whether Veterans Passes should be issued for both DAR and Coach riders. BFT would like a recommendation from CAN regarding this issue.

C. During the January BFT Board of Directors Meeting the Richland City Director questioned whether the cost of collecting Fixed Route and DAR fares is greater than the amount collected from riders.

- a. Question to BFT if a comprehensive study has been done on this issue for new fare structure and for cost of future collection methods. This would be an expansion of the presentation given to CAN in the last meeting by Kevin Sliger.
- b. Cost of distribution of Reduced Fares tickets versus amount (.11 per ticket) collected?
- c. Cost of distribution of Senior Passes, with no amount collected?
- d. Anticipated costs of Mobile App development and continuing costs?
- e. Cost of distribution of Monthly Passes versus amount collected?
- f. Cost of printing and handling Daily Passes / Tickets versus amount collected?
- g. Other Costs?

After CAN discussion with Kevin Sliger it was decided that the above Items will be presented to BFT General Manager and Chief Financial Officer for clarification. The results will be presented to CAN at next meeting.

D. Assign CAN Member to attend BFT Board Meeting in March.

CAN Member Assigned: Mathew Howie

7. BFT BOARD / BFT STAFF COMMENTS:

- A. BFT – Imelda Collop presented information regarding new rollout of Audio Instruction on Fixed Route Buses that describe route and established stops in English and Spanish. She said BFT is seeking feedback from CAN Members regarding improvements to the existing system.

She stated that she will send an email with BFT's goals and information on what is being provided. After receipt of the email CAN Secretary Dennis Kreutz will distribute it to CAN Members, for discussion at next CAN Meeting.

Dori Luzzo-Gilmour expressed a desire that the Audio Instruction on the Fixed Route buses announce all Fixed Stops in advance of arriving at them so that Riders can activate the Stop Request in time.

Bernie Cuta expressed frustration of finding the correct bus if blind, and if another method of announcing the bus destination other than just when the door opens or closes.

- B. BFT – Imelda Collop started a discussion on the use of the Transit App to augment the information that will be available from the Audio Instructions described above.

It was pointed out that the Transit App does not provide audio feedback, only on-screen display and text information.

Imelda said that she will investigate the availability of audio feedback on the Transit App.

- C. BFT – Kevin Sliger announced that a consultant is going to be hired to provide BFT with guidance on a Long-Range Service Plan that will cover a 20 year look-ahead instead of the current 6-Year Service Plan. CAN will be kept in the know as the Plan progresses so that we can provide feedback as needed.

8. CAN MEMBER COMMENTS:

- A. Frank Cuta – Why is there a hiring freeze in effect?
BFT Response – There is no hiring freeze.

- B. Frank Cuta – What is CAN position on the Via Connect Services contract expansion discussed in the February CAN Meeting?

Dennis Kreutz summarized the three services presented to the Board.

- a. Use VIA Connect to transport approximately 15 Prosser and Benton City students to and from class instead of using DAR.
- b. Use VIA Connect for On Demand Service from parking lots to Pasco Airport.
- c. Use VIA Connect for ParaTransit DAR Overflow rides. These would be rides scheduled for DAR pickup in advance, but too many for DAR to handle.

CAN Discussion: Some of these issues may be connected to the Union Contract and so CAN might not want to get involved?

Dori pointed out that she believes that the CAN has a responsibility to represent the Community and address VIA issues such as cameras in VIA Connect vehicles, training of drivers, safety of children, and continuity of drivers.

Kevin Sliger stated that the Overflow Service that will be provided by VIA Connect is going to operate differently than the normal service in that it is Door-to-Door service, and with additional training, with wheelchair accessible vans.

Dennis Kreutz pointed out that during the BFT Management presentation to the Board in January, and the statement read by BFT General Manager at the beginning of the February Board Meeting, they addressed types of vehicles, additional training, enhanced background checks, in-vehicle cameras.

CAN ACTION: Frank and Dori will wordsmith a draft of what to state to the Board regarding this issue.

- C. Frank Cuta – If Initiative 2117 is enacted will it impact BFT funding?
Discussion among CAN Members and feedback from BFT indicates that the loss of funds would be approximately \$7M per year starting in June 2025.

CAN Members discussed whether CAN should be proactive in educating the public about the effect on Paratransit Services in next CAN Meeting.

Option 1 - Propose that the Citizen Advisory Network draft a formal Recommendation to the BFT Board that they reaffirm their commitment to Move Ahead Washington Grants and state publicly that they are opposed to WA Initiative 2117, which would repeal funding for those Grants.

Option 2 – Make Public Comment that we discussed WA Initiative 2117 and we are opposed to the repeal.

Option 2 Motion Made: Frank Cuta

Motion Seconded: Laurie Price

Unanimously Approved: NO

After discussion it was decided that a formal recommendation would not be made by CAN at this time until more research is done, but would be discussed again in the next CAN Meeting.

CAN ACTION: Dori will do additional research and distribute it prior to the next CAN Meeting, for discussion in that meeting.

BFT ACTION: Kevin Sliger will make sure that CAN will receive a BFT Presentation in 1-2 months regarding the quantified information that BFT has put together regarding the potential impact of the loss of the funds.

- D. Mathew Howie – Should he present again to the Board in the March Meeting the two Recommendations that Dori read in the February Board Meeting?

After Discussion it was decided that as part of his CAN Report in the March Meeting Mathew will mention that the CAN is waiting for an update from the Board on the status of the two Recommendations, 2024-01 and 2024-02.

Approved.?

Not Approved.?

Not yet considered.?

Motion to handle the status update in this manner: Dennis Kreutz

Second the Motion: Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

Unanimously Approved: YES

- E. Dennis Kreutz – Questioned BFT as to why non-ADA Eligible school students are being picked up by BFT instead of them riding Fixed Route or School Buses.

BFT Responded that this is something that the Board wanted to provide to Benton City and Prosser. They also said that this is a service that BFT provides within the Pasco – Kennewick – Richland. This is an On-Demand Service.

- F. Dennis Kreutz – Can there be training or immersion experience for CAN Members as Riders, Dispatch/Scheduling, Operations, Training?

BFT responded that this can be done, but better to do it after the new Admin Bldg is completed.

9. OTHER:

10. NEXT MEETING:

- A. Regular CAN Meeting Monday March 25, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT:

Vice-Chair, Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

- E. Meeting adjourned at:

ATTACHMENT A

January 29, 2024

The BFT Citizen Advisory Network is tasked in CAN Standing Rules – Section 1.1.a to assist BFT by serving as an advisory body to BFT Management and to the BFT Board of Directors. In that capacity the following recommendation is offered.

CAN Recommendation 2024-01 PUBLIC COMMENTS VIA ZOOM IN BFT BOARD MEETINGS

Issue:

BFT Board of Directors announced in the January 11, 2024 Board Meeting that Public Comments via Zoom would no longer be an option.

For some of the Public the opportunity to participate in the Board Meetings via Zoom may be the only method that they have, either due to travel expense, inability to travel, or time constraints.

We have been made aware that the continuation of availability for Public Comment via Zoom would be welcomed by the public.

RCW 42.30.240

Public comment.

(2) Upon the request of any individual who will have difficulty attending a meeting of the governing body of a public agency by reason of disability, limited mobility, or for any other reason that makes physical attendance at a meeting difficult, the governing body shall, when feasible, provide an opportunity for that individual to provide oral comment at the meeting remotely if oral comment from other members of the public will be accepted at the meeting.

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=42.30.240>

Recommendation:

Since many of the Riders of BFT Fixed and DAR find it hard to attend nighttime meetings such as the BFT Board Meeting it will be a service to that community to continue to offer Zoom access with a Public Comment option.

By looking at local county and municipal government public comments including City of Richland City Council, Benton County Commissioner Meetings, City of Pasco City Council, and Franklin County Commission; they all allow in-person and remote comments.

It is the recommendation of the Citizen Advisory Network that the BFT Board of Directors reconsider this issue and continue to offer Public Comment via Zoom in future Board Meetings.

END OF CITIZEN ADVISORY NETWORK RECOMMENDATION 2024-01

ATTACHMENT B

January 29, 2024

The BFT Citizen Advisory Network is tasked in CAN Standing Rules – Section 1.1.a to assist BFT by serving as an advisory body to BFT Management and to the BFT Board of Directors. In that capacity the following recommendation is offered.

CAN Recommendation 2024-02 PUBLIC COMMENTS IN BOARD MEETINGS ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY

Issue:

Per the Agenda of the January 11, 2024 BFT Board Meeting Public Comments in the Board Meeting will no longer be allowed unless the comment is in regard to an Agenda Item.

By looking at local county and municipal government Public Comments including City of Richland City Council, Benton County Commissioner Meetings, City of Pasco City Council, and Franklin County Commission; they all allow in-meeting comments from the public on non-Agenda Items.

Recommendation:

The Citizen Advisory Network recommends allowing Public Comment on any item of public interest.

We believe that it is important that BFT Management and BFT Board be aware of issues that are of importance to the public, and the Public Comment period during BFT Board Meetings is the best method to accomplish that.

END OF CITIZEN ADVISORY NETWORK RECOMMENDATION 2024-02