



MINUTES

CITIZENS ADVISORY NETWORK REGULAR MEETING

Monday July 15, 2024 6:00 p.m.

Three Rivers Transit Center, Conference Room Kennewick, 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

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

Convened at: 6:00

Vice Chair, Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

2. ROLL CALL

Secretary / Recorder, Dennis Kreutz

Representing	Attendee Name	Title	Status
Citizen Advisory Network	Ed Frost	Chair	Zoom
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	Zoom
Citizen Advisory Network	Nayeli Aranda	Member	Zoom
Citizen Advisory Network	Brooklyn Hufstader	Member	Absent
Citizen Advisory Network	Ulises Navarro	Member	Zoom
Citizen Advisory Network	Vanessa Pruitt	Member	Present
BFT Staff	Janet Brett	Manager of Communication	Present
BFT Staff	Kevin Sliger	Chief Planning / Development	Present
BFT Staff	Imelda Collop	Planning / Development	Present
BFT Staff	Gabe Martin	Planning Manager	Present

3. COMMENTS BY GUESTS:

Vice Chair, Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

No Guests,
No Comments Online
No electronically transmitted Comments

4. JUNE 2024 MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL: Chair, Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

Discussion: None

Motion to Approve the Minutes by: Dennis Kreutz

Second to Approve the Minutes by: Frank Cuta

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

5. OLD BUSINESS:

Vice Chair, Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

- A. There was discussion in the June CAN Meeting that it would be beneficial for repeated audio messages from Coaches that are stopped at Transit Centers and that the audio might be more useful if it contained detailed route information rather than just Coach number and direction.

BFT believes that the repeat option is not available.

BFT ACTION ITEM: Find out if messaging is technically available, and if can be repeated at Transit Centers.

BFT Report by Kevin Sliger: Repeating messages while bus is stopped is not an available option.

CAN Member Frank Cuta requested information on the electronic equipment being used on the buses and that information was provided by Gabe Martin.

CAN Member Dennis Kreutz asked if the Db Level of the message had been measured. BFT Gabe Martin measured the levels at a Fixed Route Coach parked at Three Rivers Transit Center, and it was 83 Db at 10. Gabe Marting stated that the Db Levels would be checked in the future for random buses during the PM Cycle.

- B. In the June CAN Meeting we discussed email sent to CAN by Transit Awareness TC
Email is included below as Attachment C
DRAFT of possible CAN Response is included below as Attachment D

CAN ACTION ITEM: Chairperson Ed Frost will contact the email address to see if they will meet with him to discuss.

Ed Frost has reached out via email to the sender of the Transit Awareness TC email and they have declined to meet in person and will not provide any additional contact information.

Discuss if a response should be made since we received this as a Public Comment.

CAN ACTON: Discussion deferred until the August CAN Meeting.

- C. In the June CAN Meeting BFT and CAN Members discussed using the Owl Zoom Camera/Audio device during BFT Board Meetings so Directors talking can be identified by Zoom attendees.

BFT ACTION ITEM: Kevin Sliger will discuss with Board and implement if they are in agreement. Report on status.

BFT ACTION: Kevin Sliger recommended that no action be taken until the Board convenes Board Meetings at the BFT Admin Building, probably in August.

6. NEW BUSINESS:

Vice Chair, Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

- A. BFT has been requested to provide information to CAN regarding the rumored late payment of vendors.

BFT ACTION: Kevin Sliger reported that he is not sure if this is an issue or not, but will bring it up with Sarah Funk / BFT CFO to put together a report for the August CAN Meeting.

- B. BFT has been requested to provide information on the failure to distribute payroll on Friday July 12.

BFT ACTION: Kevin Sliger reported that there was in fact an issue getting payroll checks several days early as is normally the case, but that almost 100% of payroll was distributed prior to the legally required 4:00 PM Friday deadline.

Additionally an email was sent to employees explaining the problem and advising them that overdraft charges could be turned in for reimbursement.

- C. Assign CAN Member to attend July 18 BFT Board Meeting:
Assigned: Ulises Navaro

7. BFT BOARD / BFT STAFF COMMENTS:

- A. BFT Kevin Sliger reminded CAN Members that the 2025 Annual Service Plan presentation to BFT Board will be made in a special meeting at 5:00 PM Thursday July 18 prior to the Regular Board Meeting.
- B. BFT Janet Brett advised CAN Members that BFT has procured two attendee tickets for one day of the Upcoming Transit Conference in Kennewick. She requested that CAN advise her of the names of the attendees ASAP.
- C. BFT Janet Brett provided a copy of the BFT Public Transportation Benefit Area Authority Bylaws that had been requested by the CAN.

8. CAN MEMBER COMMENTS:

A. CAN requested an update on the status of the Ranger System, in light of the many outages over the past 6+ weeks.

BFT Kevin Sliger stated that there have been issues since upgrades were attempted to be installed. This is an ongoing problem that is being worked on by the vendor.

B. CAN requested an update on the status of the contract extension with VIA Connect services.

BFT Kevin Sliger stated that the contract extension has been executed, but service changes will not go into effect until August.

Cameras are being added to vehicles.

Additional vehicles with Paratransit capabilities are being added.

Additional driver background checks and training will take place.

Additional services will be Paratransit Overflow only.

9. OTHER:

10. NEXT MEETING:

A. Regular CAN Meeting Monday August 19, 2024, in the Ben Franklin Three Rivers Transit Center Building, at 6:00 p.m.

11. ADJOURNMENT:

A. Meeting adjourned at: 7:43 PM

Vice Chair, Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

ATTACHMENT C: EMAIL SENT TO CAN BY TRANSIT AWARENESS TC

From: transit awareness tc [mailto:transitawarenesstc@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, June 14, 2024 11:08 AM

To: brookhuf@gmail.com; catlady126@aol.com; dennis.kreutz@yahoo.com; Dori Luzzo Gilmour; edwinfrosto123@gmail.com; frank@cuta.net; laurie.price@rsd.edu; myorkhowie@gmail.com; naaranda@psd1.org; pvanessa68@gmail.com; ulisesn@alcon.media

Subject: Urgent Call for Accountability and Representation

Dear Citizens Advisory Network Members,

I am deeply troubled by recent developments at our agency over the past year. The decisions to replace essential dial-a-ride services with a taxi service, consider discontinuing free youth riding, restrict public comment, propose fare increases, implement service reductions, face impending layoffs, and encounter challenges with the sales tax issue threaten to significantly impact our services. These actions raise serious concerns about the direction and decision-making within our agency.

I have cc'd you on a message to the board that provides insights into the current challenges we are facing. The reality is that the previous general manager's actions led to a significant loss of staff. Unfortunately, the current interim GM is continuing down a similar path, making irrational decisions that have resulted in unpaid bills, vendors unwilling to work with us, and crucial reports not being submitted promptly, jeopardizing our funding and operations. It appears our agency is in a state of disarray.

We are at a crucial juncture where choosing the right CEO is paramount. The current leadership lacks the essential comprehension and expertise needed to proficiently manage our taxpayer funds and effectively serve the community. Instead, we are witnessing the agency falter due to poor leadership and mismanagement. The lack of accountability within the board is equally concerning and unacceptable.

Here's how you can contribute:

1. Advocate for inclusion in the evaluation process of a new CEO.
2. Evaluate the validity of my concerns and their impact on our agency.
3. Request from HR a detailed staff headcount and hire dates.
4. Investigate the number of outstanding bills and the implications.
5. Demand a monthly list of public comments.
6. Request a comprehensive budget analysis with year by year comparison dating back to 2021.

Looking ahead, I believe it's crucial to enhance accountability within our agency. I propose that a member of the Citizens Advisory Network (CAN) be appointed to the board. This step will ensure that your voices are heard and that we have better oversight and accountability for the board, GM, and CEO, thereby preventing such situations from arising again in the future.

As you conduct your evaluation, you will discover that our concerns are justified. Ben Franklin Transit must prioritize the community's needs and restore efficient service. It is crucial that prompt action is taken to appoint capable leadership and resolve the current situation.

Thank you for your attention to these urgent matters. Together, we can ensure our agency meets its responsibilities to the community.

ATTACHMENT D: CAN RESPONSE TO EMAIL BY TRANSIT AWARENESS TC DRAFT 01

CAN Response to Transit Awareness TC email dated June 14, 2024 DRAFT 01

1.

Dear Citizens Advisory Network Members

I am deeply troubled by recent developments at our agency over the past year.

CAN: Need to respond to BFT and Board since we received as a Guest Comment?

2.

The decisions to replace essential dial-a-ride services with a taxi service

3.

consider discontinuing free youth riding

4.

restrict public comment

5.

propose fare increases

6.

implement service reductions

7.

face impending layoffs

8.

and encounter challenges with the sales tax issue threaten to significantly impact our services.

9.

These actions raise serious concerns about the direction and decision-making within our agency.

10.

I have cc'd you on a message to the board that provides insights into the current challenges we are facing.

CAN: Put message on CAN Agenda.

11.

The reality is that the previous general manager's actions led to a significant loss of staff.

12.

Unfortunately, the current interim GM is continuing down a similar path, making irrational decisions that have resulted in unpaid bills,

13.

vendors unwilling to work with us,

14.

and crucial reports not being submitted promptly,

15.

jeopardizing our funding and operations.

16.

It appears our agency is in a state of disarray.

17.

We are at a crucial juncture where choosing the right CEO is paramount.

18.

The current leadership lacks the essential comprehension and expertise needed to proficiently manage our taxpayer funds and effectively serve the community.

19.

Instead, we are witnessing the agency falter due to poor leadership and mismanagement.

20.

The lack of accountability within the board is equally concerning and unacceptable.22.
Here's how you can contribute:

20a.

1. Advocate for inclusion in the evaluation process of a new CEO.

20b.

2. Evaluate the validity of my concerns and their impact on our agency.

20c

3. Request from HR a detailed staff headcount and hire dates.

20d,

4. Investigate the number of outstanding bills and the implications.

20e,

5. Demand a monthly list of public comments.

20f.

6. Request a comprehensive budget analysis with year by year comparison dating back to 2021.

21.

Looking ahead, I believe it's crucial to enhance accountability within our agency.

22.

I propose that a member of the Citizens Advisory Network (CAN) be appointed to the board. This step will ensure that your voices are heard and that we have better oversight and accountability for the board, GM, and CEO, thereby preventing such situations from arising again in the future.

23.

As you conduct your evaluation, you will discover that our concerns are justified.

24.

Ben Franklin Transit must prioritize the community's needs and restore efficient service.

25.

It is crucial that prompt action is taken to appoint capable leadership and resolve the current situation.

26.

Thank you for your attention to these urgent matters. Together, we can ensure our agency meets its responsibilities to the community.