

BEN FRANKLIN TRANSIT

Citizens Advisory Network Standing Rules

(Revised August 10, 2023)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to define the duties of the Citizens Advisory Network (CAN) and adopt rules for the transaction of business of the CAN.

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Ben Franklin Transit (BFT) Citizens Advisory Network to advocate for public transit and to serve as a resource to BFT management and Board of Directors in accomplishing the BFT mission and goals.

SECTION 1 – CAN SCOPE AND MEMBERSHIP

SECTION 1.1 - SCOPE

The Citizens Advisory Network shall assist BFT in the following capacities:

- a) Serve as an advisory body to BFT management and Board of Directors; all actions or recommendations of the CAN are strictly advisory.
- b) Promote and communicate the transit's goals and objectives to the public.
- c) Represent interests of the community and assist BFT staff and Board in meeting transit's goals.
- d) Expand awareness of the public's perception of BFT activities.
- e) Speak on behalf of constituents when commenting on transit's plans, policies, and services.
- f) The CAN is not intended to be a complaint resolution or appeals board.

SECTION 1.2 - COMPOSITION

- a) The CAN shall be composed of no less than nine (9) and no more than fifteen (15) members.
- b) CAN members shall serve without compensation except reimbursement for expenses as may be approved by the BFT Board.

SECTION 1.3 - MEMBERSHIP SELECTION PROCESS

- a) CAN membership shall reflect the demographics of BFT's Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA); reside within that area; and strive for broad, inclusive, and diverse representation.
- b) Applicants being considered for membership are to be reviewed by BFT management prior to being interviewed by the CAN Recruitment Committee.
- c) BFT staff cannot serve as members of the CAN.
- d) CAN membership may include, but shall not be limited to, representatives of the following interests, groups, or areas:

Areas of Representative Interest:

Fixed-Route Rider	Individuals with no car, rides to work
Dial-A-Ride Rider	Unconditional rider, conditional rider
Vanpool/Contracted Services	Vanpool rider/driver, CONNECT user
Business/Chambers of Commerce	Tri-Cities Regional Chamber or other Chambers
Human Service Organizations:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medical Community Representative • Mental Health Community Provider • Senior/Disabled Provider • Other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tri-City Community Health, dialysis centers • Lourdes Counseling Center, other mental health agencies • Adult day care, home health care agencies • WorkFirst, DCYF, DSHS, children’s centers
Major Employer Representative	PNNL, other top 10 employers
Student Riders/High School & College	Ethnic Community Organizations
Transit Supporters	Retired BFT employees, former BFT Board members
Law Enforcement	Community Liaison Officer
Educational Agency Representative	ESD staff, school district staff, college staff
Economic Development/Tourism	TRIDEC, Tri-Cities Visitor & Convention Bureau
Recreational/Bicycling/Pedestrian Advocate	Bicycle clubs, 3 Rivers Bicycle Coalition
Clean Air/Good Roads/Energy Advocate	Benton Clean Air Agency

SECTION 1.4 - APPOINTMENTS TO THE CAN

- a) The BFT Board of Directors shall have the power to appoint or remove any CAN member at any time it is deemed essential to maintain the integrity of the overall CAN function and to maintain balanced community representation.
- b) A CAN member shall be appointed for a two-year term and may reapply for additional two-year terms.
- c) Upon completion of a two-year term, CAN members shall relinquish their position unless the General Manager has confirmed reappointment for another two-year term.
- d) BFT management may develop, subject to Board review, further rules related to seating of members and terms of service as necessary and appropriate to facilitate BFT’s needs.
- e) The first two-year term for CAN members during a calendar year will commence the following January 1. The CAN member will be a voting member of the Network following the date their application is approved by the CAN membership.
- f) CAN members representing any of the Chambers of Commerce, TRIDEC, and the Tri-Cities Visitor & Convention Bureau shall serve at the discretion of the appointing organization except as provided in item a) above.
- g) CAN members who are unable to complete their term may submit their resignation to the Secretary/Recorder.
- h) The General Manager, or a representative appointed by the General Manager for such a purpose, shall serve as a nonvoting member of the CAN and act as the primary liaison between the CAN Chair and BFT.
- i) At no time while serving on the CAN shall CAN members represent themselves as employees or consultants of BFT.

SECTION 1.5 - CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Any CAN member having an interest in a matter being considered by the CAN which would tend to prejudice his or her actions in opposition to BFT's mission and goals shall so indicate and refrain from deliberations or voting upon such matter. In addition, should the circumstances arise, each CAN member shall ensure that his or her actions do not violate the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine; i.e., that all parties to an argument are to receive equal treatment.

SECTION 1.6 - TRANSPORTATION PASSES

As noted in Section 1.2.b, CAN members shall serve without compensation; however, each CAN member shall always be entitled to a free fare transportation pass for use on all BFT services for their individual use during their term of appointment as a member of the Network.

- a) Said pass privilege shall serve as a principal means whereby a CAN member can observe and be informed in connection with their duties and responsibilities to BFT. While using BFT services and participating in the community, CAN members accept an inherent responsibility to present a positive reflection of BFT.
- b) CAN members are not allowed to share their CAN member BFT pass.
- c) Misuse of transportation privileges will result in termination of the free pass privilege for the current year. Misuse or unauthorized use of transportation privileges exceeding a single incident may result in permanent termination of this privilege and/or the person's removal from the CAN.
- d) Any transit pass provided for CAN members shall be returned at the expiration of the CAN member's final term of office.
- e) One replacement pass will be issued per calendar year.
- f) For an additional lost or destroyed free transportation pass, a charge of \$10.00 will be assessed.

SECTION 2 - MEETINGS

SECTION 2.1 - CAN REGULAR MEETINGS

- a) Unless cancelled in advance by the CAN Executive Committee, the CAN members shall meet at least once per month. The date and time of the CAN Regular Meeting shall be agreed on by members at the previous CAN meeting.
- b) In-person attendance by all CAN members is highly encouraged; however, BFT shall provide accommodation for both in-person and virtual attendance at all CAN meetings.
- c) BFT's General Manager or his/her representative must receive an agenda one week in advance of all meetings.
- d) Voting by CAN members participating remotely shall be allowed.
- e) A quorum shall consist of a majority of the currently appointed CAN members.
- f) The rules contained in *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the CAN meetings in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Standing Rules.

SECTION 2.2 - SPECIAL MEETINGS

- a) Special meetings may be held if requested by the CAN Chair.

SECTION 3 - POWERS AND DUTIES

The CAN, at the direction of BFT management, may be authorized and empowered to act in an information-gathering and fact-finding role for BFT and shall maintain appropriate

confidentiality regarding issues shared by staff or the Board. Any actions or recommendations of this committee are strictly advisory. In addition, the CAN is further empowered and authorized to assist BFT management as follows:

- a) To review significant policy decisions under consideration by BFT management including major service changes, fare policy, budget adoption or changes, the development of public and customer facilities, and such other issues or concerns that may impact the public and customer relations of Ben Franklin Transit and to make recommendations regarding these issues and concerns.
- b) To support efforts to improve public understanding and confidence in the benefits of using public transportation.
- c) To increase recognition of the role public transportation plays in the economic vitality and traffic congestion relief in the BFT service area.
- d) To support and help facilitate the efforts to improve communication with community and local business leaders concerning the impact of BFT programs.
- e) To review ridership and customer service programs to identify and recommend practices and technologies that increase ridership and improve customer services.
- f) To identify and recommend programs, practices, and technologies that assist riders in the use of Fixed Route, Dial-A-Ride (DAR), CONNECT, General Demand, and Vanpool services.
- g) To provide a forum for discussion of local public transportation issues and to foster a better understanding of the issues between users and nonusers of the system.
- h) The CAN is an advisory group and, therefore, it is strictly understood that all actions and recommendations made by the CAN are advisory only and do not constitute an action or obligation of the BFT Board of Directors or of any BFT employees. In this capacity, the CAN is not authorized to act as an agent of BFT or to contract or incur any obligations on behalf of BFT.

SECTION 4 – ELECTIONS AND TERMS OF OFFICE FOR OFFICERS

The CAN shall elect its own officers from among its members and create and fill such other offices as it may determine that its needs require. The CAN shall adopt rules for the transaction of CAN business and shall keep written records of its meetings, transactions, findings, and determinations, which shall become public records.

SECTION 4.1 – OFFICERS

Officers of the CAN shall consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Recorder, and Past Chair, and such other officers as may be needed, to be elected by the CAN at the last meeting of each calendar year, or as needed, to serve a one-year term commencing January 1 of each year.

The duties of officers shall be as follows:

- a) **Chair**
 - Determine meeting dates
 - Determine meeting topics in coordination with BFT General Manager or his/her representative
 - Preside over all meetings
 - Develop meeting agenda in coordination with the Secretary/Recorder
 - Act as spokesperson for the CAN, interacting with BFT management as requested
 - Preserve order and decorum and decide all questions of order
 - Attend or appoint the Vice Chair or other CAN member to represent the CAN at monthly

- BFT Board meetings
 - Provide leadership and direction for the CAN
 - Perform other duties as may be requested from time to time by the CAN or BFT management
 - Shall oversee a nomination in October for the CAN to select a slate of proposed officers for the following year
 - Be removed as Chair by vote of a majority of the CAN and/or a BFT Board directive
- b) **Vice Chair**
- Have the powers and perform the duties of the Chair in the absence or inability of the Chair to serve
 - Perform other such duties from time to time as may be requested by the Chair
- c) **Recording Secretary**
- Keep a record of proceedings, have charge of all records, and perform other administrative support as needed. The record of the CAN meetings shall be provided to the BFT Board of Directors.
- d) **Past Chair**
- Serve as a nonvoting officer, acting in an advisory role to the other officers

SECTION 5 – COMMITTEES

SECTION 5.1 - RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE

A three-person Recruitment Committee, one of which shall be the Vice Chair, shall be appointed by the Chair by the second regularly scheduled meeting of the calendar year and shall serve for one year. Their duties shall be to assist in the recruitment and recommendation of CAN members and officers.

SECTION 5.2 - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Recorder, and Past Chair, with BFT General Manager, or appropriate representative, as a nonvoting member. The Executive Committee shall meet at the discretion of the CAN Chair to develop and recommend ways to meet the CAN's goals for accomplishing identified projects.

SECTION 5.3 - OTHER COMMITTEES

The CAN shall have the ability to form such other committees as needed and appropriate. Subcommittees shall report their activities to the CAN and to the BFT Board on a regular basis.

SECTION 6 - AMENDMENTS

Recommendations of amendments to these Standing Rules can be approved at any regular meeting of the CAN by a two-thirds vote of the total current CAN membership, provided the proposed amendment was submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting. All amendments to the Standing Rules of the BFT CAN must be approved by the BFT Board of Directors.