

BEN FRANKLIN TRANSIT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, August 11, 2016-7:00 p.m.
1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland, WA

1. Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call: MATT WATKINS (Chairman), BOB KOCH, STEVE BECKEN, RICHARD BLOOM, STEVE YOUNG, NORMA NELSON, (TERRY CHRISTENSEN, JEROME DELVIN, RICK MILLER, LISA STADE, excused)

Staff: Gloria Boyce, Tony Kalmbach, Kevin Hebdon, Katherine Ostrom, Joshua Rosas (in for Jerry Otto), Rob Orvis, Paul Holgate, Kevin Sliger, Brooke Follett, Michaela Dimas, Patrick T. Roach, Legal Counsel.

Visitors: Manuel Soto, Mobility and Walkability Consulting; Teresa Payne, CAC Representative

3. **Pledge of Allegiance**

CHAIRMAN WATKINS invited RICHARD BLOOM to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. **Citizens Public Comment/Introduction of Visitors**

CHAIRMAN WATKINS invited introductions of guests or public comment on any item not on the agenda.

No public comment.

5. **Approval of Agenda**

CHAIRMAN WATKINS called for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. No modifications were made to the agenda.

ACTION: RICHARD BLOOM made and BOB KOCH seconded a motion to approve the agenda. No discussion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. **Retirement Recognition**

- A. Resolution 52-2016 – Christine Landis, BFT Dial-A-Ride Driver
December 15, 1997 – July 1, 2016

Katherine Ostrom, Operations Manager, stated Christine Landis was not present. Katherine Ostrom read from the resolution and stated Christine Landis has served BFT as a Dial-A-Ride Driver for the past 18 years. During those years, Christine safely transported thousands of passengers over thousands of miles. Christine was always able to make passengers smile with a caring attitude and personality. Her compassion for others and her personality have been key in making Dial-A-Ride a popular service in our community. Christine passengers and co-workers will miss her caring nature and ever present smile. We wish Christine Landis all the best in her future endeavors and congratulations on her retirement.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS called for a motion to approve Resolution 52-2016.

ACTION: STEVE YOUNG made and STEVE BECKEN seconded a motion to approve Resolution 52-2016. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated that if Ms. Landis wants to come in, we will redo a portion of this again. We will get her lifetime bus pass to her. He asked Katherine Ostrom to make sure Christine Landis gets her certificate.

7. Board Committee Reports – Meeting Notes included in the Board Packet

- A. Planning & Marketing Committee - Cancelled
- B. Operations & Maintenance Committee - Cancelled
- C. Administration & Finance Committee - Cancelled

8. Consent Agenda (Any item is open for discussion at Board or Public Request)

- A. Approval of July 14, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes
- B. Payroll Voucher Summary
- C. Resolution 53-2016 - Authorizing the General Manager to extend and utilize contract options for up to three (3) years with Summit Law Group.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

ACTION: STEVE YOUNG made a motion to approve Consent Agenda, items A-C and STEVE BECKEN seconded. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

July 2016 vouchers audited and certified by Ben Franklin Transit’s auditing officer as required by RCW 42.24.080, and those expense reimbursement claims certified as required by RCW 42.24.090, have been recorded on a listing, which was emailed to the Board Members August 5, 2016.

Payroll

Check Register Number	Check Number/ Number		Date of Issue	In the Amount	
514-16	78321	78353	07/08/2016	352,522.34	Payroll
515-16	78354	78427	07/03/2016	12, 584.96	Payroll
516-16	78428	78460	07/22/2016	377,095.66	Payroll
				Total	\$742,202.96

Non-Payroll Vouchers

180-16	61598	61660	07/08/2016	314,163.13	Mdse
181-16	61661	61661	07/08/2016	265,992.90	Mdse
182-16	ACH Transactions		07/11/2016	344,692.68	ACH TRANS

183-16	61662	61669	07/11/2016	20,261.11	Mdse
184-16	61670	61670	07/13/2016	100.00	Msde
185-16	61671	61779	07/15/2016	319,307.76	Mdse
186-16	61780	61810	07/25/2016	279,762.34	Mdse
187-16	61811	61812	07/27/2016	77,999.98	Mdse
188-16	ACH Transactions		07/28/2016	147,090.43	ACH TRANS
189-16	VOID	61168	07/28/2016	(98.52)	VOID
190-16	61813	61862	07/29/2016	185,090.39	Mdse
				Total	\$1,954,361.20

Check Register Numbers 514-16 to 516-16 and 180-16 to 190-16
 In the total amount of:

\$2,696,564.16

(BFT Board Standing Committees Recommended Approval of Consent Items to the Full Board of Directors)

9. Action Items

A. Resolution 54-2016 – Approve the Comprehensive Service Plan Study (CSPS) Recommendations and Implementation Phase

Gloria Boyce, General Manager, stated that we have waited a long time for this Comprehensive Service Plan Study. The last nine months we have been working hard on this project. This evening you are going to hear the presentation given by our Service Planning Development Manager, Tony Kalmbach, and our consultant, Manuel Soto.

Tony Kalmbach, Planning and Services Development Manager, wanted to present the final recommendations for the comprehensive service plan study. Staff and consulting began the process in November 2015 and over the last nine months; we have worked thoroughly and thoughtfully as we have brought forth the best recommendations for effective and efficient service in our community. It is important to have a good strong foundation to go forward in order to understand how we can change and adjust our services and grow. Manuel Soto is here to give the recommendations to the Board.

Manuel Soto, with Mobility and Walkability Consulting, says good evening. CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated this is the fun part. Manuel Soto stated that it is great to get to the end. This process has been great and very collaborative working with Ben Franklin Transit. He stated that we have a meaningful relationship. These recommendations have not been the consultant’s by any stretch. The project began on October 29, 2015 with a purpose to establish service needs, priorities, changing service and to update strategies. An advisory committee of 10 people was established to figure out what changes needed to be made to service in fall of 2015. We had a round of conversations with each different department within the agency to collect information from them. In addition, we spoke with providers of Tri City Taxi Services and The Arc. Seven open house sessions were conducted, one in each of the six cities within the public transit benefit area (PTBA) and the seventh one at Three Rivers transit center. The total number of people attended the events was 46 and close to 100, respectively. The first round was to get input from what the community wanted. The second round of open houses, taking place in May of 2016, was to discuss the plan and how to improve our network. Visioning sessions took place with the BFT Board, we covered three main topics: an overview of service performance of the system, transit one-on-one educational etiquette, and lastly priorities and trade-offs that were confronted as we went through the exercise. We ran a 100 percent performance evaluation on each route. All of these factors were the foundation for all our recommendations.

The outcome for fixed route network redesign had five objectives. The first one is to reach all parts of town with one transfer by extending routes and reduce the forced transfers. The second goal was to create more direct and frequent connections between cities by providing higher frequency across all bridges and to have a service target every 15 minutes in concentrated population areas. The third goal is to reach emerging employment areas and activity centers within and outside the network coverage. By reducing service duplication and route overlaps in core areas of Richland, Kennewick, and Pasco in addition to relying on walking access to routes, service becomes more efficient. Finally, Extend weekday service hours from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm and 7:00 am to 7:00 pm Saturday in Prosser and Benton City for demand response recommendation. The purpose of this study is to address these issues as much as possible with our limited resources.

The fixed route changes are most routes will be one-hour frequency throughout the day which is a decrease during midday operations. Route 225 will now serve the Burden and Road 68 with 30-minute frequencies between Richland and Pasco. Routes 120 and 126 will have a 15-minute frequency between Knight Street Transfer Center and Three Rivers Transfer point. Routes 150 and 160 will provide service every 15 minutes on Court Street and Clearwater Avenue. Route 170 will provide an increase in frequency to Prosser every 2 hours. One additional goal is to reduce Huntington Transfer Center. Dial-A-Ride service will mirror the fixed route service hours. No change will be made to Sunday service. Vanpool service will not have any change but we will continue to market the service.

Mr. Soto continued to report that the service provided by Trans Plus will operate from 8 pm until midnight Monday through Saturday. This is a significant reduction in service hours. By extending fixed route service until 8 pm, there is no need for the Night Service to start until 8 pm. The amount of service lost between the hours of midnight to 2 am was only 12 percent of the entire service usage thus making it not the most efficient to operate that service past midnight. Taxi service needs to be studied more before better recommendations can be made. Taxi night service sees many cross-town trips with the majority of trips being inside the bus network.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS commented that if anyone had any questions along the way, to feel free to ask throughout the presentation.

Service recommendations for Taxi Feeder and Finley Service were to reorganize service from designated pick-up points to select (nearest) fixed-route bus stop and to eliminate premium fare barriers. The major change we are proposing is one plan is a limit up to the Public Transit Benefit Area (PTBA) or up to four miles from fixed route. Finley is beyond the four miles of fixed route network. First boundary would be the PTBA and the second boundary would be four miles from the fixed route bus network as long as it falls within the PTBA.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS asked if the boundary is the PTBA or the four-mile boundary if it is inside the PTBA.

Manuel Soto continued to report there's no taxi feeder service in the southeastern portion of Finley. However, Rancho Reata, a Richland neighborhood, does receive service.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS added we have to be careful of that or reconsideration of the PTBA.

Manuel Soto continued to state that a reduction in service hours from 8:00 pm to midnight for the Taxi Night Service and to cap costs is what the best plan at this point in the comprehensive service plan study. Sunday Service will have no changes at this point in the comprehensive service study plan.

Service Investment Strategy is comprised of three pieces: the first is a twenty percent increase in operation cost (short-term) about a \$3 million increase in cost. The second strategy will be service investment allocation for seventy percent longer service hours, thirty percent frequency. The last strategy will be to have a supporting service investment of \$150k increase on Taxi Feeder service bringing it up to a total of \$300k, \$120k increase on Prosser/Benton City demand response service mostly to cover the Saturday service. Taxi service between 8 pm and midnight is costing about \$1 million so the proposal is to \$500k cap on Taxi Night service and gives priority to school, work, and medical trips. A contingency fund will be at \$500k to be used for additional taxi service or additional feeder service or Prosser/Benton City needs.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS mentioned to be clear that this is an increase in cost at the same time is talking about potential cost savings and increased efficiencies.

Manuel Soto stated that there is a chart at the end that balances everything out in regards to the increase of cost and the potential cost savings.

STEVE YOUNG asked if we are increasing the overall cost.

Manuel Soto stated there will be an increase in the overall cost by twenty percent.

Manuel Soto stated some expected impacts and benefits to making these changes to the system would be more efficient coverage of existing riders due to fewer network vehicle miles but same square miles of coverage.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS asked if these routes were cherry picked to demonstrate the perfect routes. They were intended to be average type routes.

Manuel Soto stated we didn't spend a lot of time cherry picking. We picked one from one point to another point. This change in service will provide more of the population and jobs with access to frequent service with absolute coverage of population and jobs if they remain the same. The result will be more effective coverage of PM peak period. We plan to have more reliable service on Saturday due to more routes in operation and more hours of service makes for a higher utility. Fewer transfer points will allow faster trips due to longer routes, direct connections and reduced transfer points. One final benefit will be reduced boardings but more riders yielding an increase in fare revenue per passenger. Manuel Soto asked if there were any questions. No questions were asked.

Tony Kalmbach, Planning and Services Manager, thanked Manuel Soto. Tony Kalmbach stated that tonight the staff has brought the final recommendations to the Board for final approval and for staff to begin the implementation phase for this project. The recommendations that are being brought forward are a foundation for us to begin the implementation. The implementation phase requires a lot of additional work as we dive into the routes, start setting up those timings, the time points to make sure some of those schedule modifications that Manuel has spoken to in his presentation about creating some of those unique opportunities for those 15 minutes frequencies across the cities. We will start looking at that and ensuring that the system can meet the intended foundation that we have planned.

Tony Kalmbach stated the next step in the project schedule would begin in October 2016, to focus on building consumer confidence and encourage people to ride and to create measurable and metrics for six month evaluation in September of 2017, and to develop system-wide marketing materials. We want to understand how our service changes are impacting the community and what the satisfaction level is within the changes and how we can improve the agency. In November 2016 will begin testing and developing the comprehensive service plan recommendations. We will meet our title VI service Equity

Analysis requires as required by the Federal Transit Administration. We will conduct our amenities studies and looking at where we need to have our amenities placed along our fixed route service changes, and to begin updating our systems as far as our transit needs and google network so that we can do the trip planner to increase our ability for customers to plan their trips on the new system. In December after the work is all done, we will bring the final service plan to the Board. There could be some slight changes as we do work through those route changes which might include a shift here or there as we move from one street to another. Frequencies might have to be adjusted just because the time points won't align correctly. The goal going forward is to maintain the core purpose of these service recommendations that we're presenting tonight to the Board. In January of 2017, pending board approval of the final service plan, we will begin all of our marketing efforts, the bus stop placements, and amenities from this study. Services technically set to begin in March of 2017, with the service evaluation happening in September 2017 and then presented to the Board. Tony Kalmbach stated that he would be happy to answer any additional questions.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated that this is potentially a significant change probably the most significant change in at least a dozen years. I heard a couple of things: 97% of the people will stay have the same kind of service. Inevitably all these things will improve the system but then some people might not have been here for this meeting or been involved in one of the meetings and be concerned. I imagine staff would be looking at what potential hiccups there might be because of this change. If there aren't, he would be surprised. CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated that because he threw the softball. He thinks we have also seen some of the potential things and we will be watching staff work through those things and anticipates receiving phone calls.

Gloria Boyce, General Manager stated that one of the core components of a service plan is developing policies and procedures behind this service plan which serve as guideposts for us into operate the system. We will be updating all of our policies and procedures. We will in the fall or early spring come back to the Board with some of these decisions on what is the Board's vision for extended night services at night service hours in addition to how do we manage rural area access in our rural areas, ADA service, and demand response. All of those are questions that need to be answered by the Board. First, they have to give directions to develop those policies so that as we continue to move forward, we have a baseline and guideposts in which to follow for our community. We have identified areas of concern. We have already started within our community to certain groups and within those groups will be affected. Benefits that must change out of schedule compliance or change because of Board policy implementation. We have tried to identify all of those and that is in our October kickoff material is our continued community outreach. Any type of change in service and change in work levels, we will work with the operators and mechanics, fixed route and Dial-A-Ride to negotiate the changes in service from the Columbia bargaining agreement.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS asked if there were any additional discussion or questions.

STEVE YOUNG wanted to commend Tony on the work he has done putting this Comprehensive Service Plan Study together. It takes extremely good leadership to develop a plan like this, perform a study, and bring it altogether. I spent many years doing similar things so I just wanted to commend you on what you have accomplished. You are quite an asset to this organization.

Tony Kalmbach replied thank you very much.

STEVE BECKEN stated my biggest concern is the measurable and metrics. We have been tracking boardings forever. This plan is to reduce boardings. That is a good thing. Maybe revenue and maybe we can't tell because people with passes. In developing those metrics, we have to see change in what is going

on. That is going to be the crux of where my concern is, are we going to be able to be able to judge success. Not that this plan is a bad plan at all. We will be blind and we will be blinded for a while.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS suggests we would have some experience in this issue because of finances changed I can't remember the exact time frame but our current director went through and changed things and through judicious reminders of it changed. More understanding that things would change. I would daresay that we have a much better feel for our finances and I would hope and expect this kind of change would be a similar route. We will have a bit of faith that it will work out in the end.

STEVE BECKEN stated that I have full faith. I just see certain entities using our numbers against us.

STEVE YOUNG stated, Mr. Chairman, I think we have to be careful though that you can reduce boardings and increase ridership. The things I hear most are its too difficult to get somewhere or it takes too long to get somewhere. We have to change too many times. What I have seen in this plan, every one of those problems was addressed. If you can solve the major problems that people are concerned with you are going to increase ridership. Time will tell to what extent.

STEVE BECKEN asked how to we measure ridership. We are changing our method.

Tony Kalmbach would like to commend my team and all the support that we got here at Ben Franklin Transit. The operators have been a huge part of this change as well. They are the eyes and the ears on the road for Ben Franklin Transit staff and they really provide feedback for us to put some examples together for these recommendations before the Board. I would like to thank my staff that worked with me and other staff in other departments has been an asset as well.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated that almost everybody has been involved with this in some way. What we presented tonight, although not in its final form, was shared with people so that this is not a surprise. Here's what were question is, where's what we think we are going. This is a refinement of that last thing. This isn't a surprise to the folks in the community that did show up to those meetings.

Mr. Soto said at least 90 percent of what you saw here is what the community saw. The final 10 percent of this presentation is feedback that we have received.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS asked if there was going to be a public hearing.

Gloria Boyce stated the open houses, CHAIR WATKINS, were the community involvement. We made the recommendations. We made changes. Following that, we went out to the community again. That was the public involvement process. Now when we do all of the backend work, we have something concrete that is a good 99 percent there then we will hold a 30 day review and public hearings again on the final plan at which time if there are any adjustments staff needs to make. That will be the public hearing process as well as the equity analysis before we come back to the Board to adopt the final Comprehensive Service Plan.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS makes a motion to approve Resolution 54-2016.

ACTION: STEVE YOUNG made a motion to approve Resolution 54-2016, and STEVE BECKEN seconded. Discussion held. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated this was a big evening. He thanked the staff, the community, and the Board and our hired folks for helping for what has obviously been a very important next step for transit. It

has been a busy couple of years. He is sure it will be another busy couple of years, so it will take a while to implement these things. Great job so far, thank you all.

(BFT Board Standing Committees recommended approval of Action Items to the Full Board of Directors)

10. Discussion/Information Items

A. Citizens Advisory Committee Report

Kevin Sliger, Transit Planner, stated that Theresa just left. She would just like to thank staff for accepting the Comprehensive Service Plan Study and she is excited about it.

11. Staff Reports & Comments

A. Legal Report

Patrick T. Roach, Legal Counsel, had no report.

B. Treasurer's/Budget/Sales Tax Report

Kevin Hebdon, Interim Admin Service Manager, stated revenue is over budget and expenditures under budget. Sales tax revenue continues to trend in a favorable manner. Everything was in your packet as far as the PTBA, our jurisdictions and the treasurer's report. Finally, our treasurer's report balance remains strong. Mr. Hebdon would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Sales Tax revenue increased 3.8% in July for May business as compared to July 2015. 2016 total sales tax revenues were 8.6% above the annual budgeted amount and 7.3% over 2015 total sales tax revenues.

C. General Manager's Report

Gloria Boyce, General Manager, reported on the following:

Condolences: On behalf of the BFT Board and staff, we have sent a card to Mike Garrison's family. We express our condolences to the family of Pasco Councilmember Mike Garrison who has served in various BFT Board capacities since 1989. Our condolences not only go out to the city of Pasco but to the staff as well.

Government Affairs Update

Federal: Earlier this month we were notified that Linda Gehrke has been appointed Regional Administrator for Region 10. She replaces long term Administrator Rick Krochalis who retired in May. No word yet on our Capital Bus grant, we anticipate a decision by early September. \$6.5M Bus Capital Grant for thirteen (13) buses.

State: Earlier this week we were notified that Gov. Inslee has appointed Roger Millar as secretary of the Department of Transportation. We were able to meet Mr. Millar in June while attending the Benton City Round about ribbon cutting ceremony.

Operations:

All transit operations continue to run smoothly over the last month. Kudos to our maintenance and facilities teams for keeping the air conditioning flowing in our buildings and fleet during the hot weather.

Our Allied Arts and Water Follies service ran extremely well this year, though ridership and event attendance was down approximately this year. Boardings totaled just over 300.

Next week is Fair week, our biggest event of the year. Ms. Boyce invites you to come out and experience our new services that will pick-up and drop-off in the back of the fairgrounds along Fair Oaks. We have been working with many jurisdictions. We appreciate the collaboration from the Benton County Fair Board but other jurisdictions as well. We are ready, we are nimble, and we are flexible. We invite you come to see that service in action next week. We will be probably running a skeleton crew for critical items and the rest will be up at the Fair Grounds, particularly in the evening. Ms. Boyce stated that she would be happy to answer any questions.

STEVE YOUNG stated that he received a phone call from Olympia, the Washington State Ridesharing Organization (WSRO) and it was confusing to me. He asked if Ms. Boyce was aware of a meeting that is going to be held here by the State Department of Transportation. Ms. Boyce replied yes, she is aware of the meeting. Ms. Boyce stated that she would give a quick briefing to STEVE YOUNG after the meeting.

12. Board Member Comments

NORMA NELSON – no comment.

STEVE BECKEN - no comment.

RICHARD BLOOM - no comment.

BOB KOCH – no comment.

STEVE YOUNG – no comment.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS - no comment.

13. Next Meeting – Thursday, September 8, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. **1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland WA**

14. Executive Session

No Executive Session held.

15. Adjournment

CHAIRMAN WATKINS promptly adjourned the Regular Board of Directors meeting at 8:08 p.m.

Meeting recorded by:

Michaela Dimas, Clerk of the Board

Scribed by:

Brooke Follett, Interim Clerk of the Board

August 11, 2016