

**BEN FRANKLIN TRANSIT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, March 10, 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, PAUL PARISH, RICK MILLER, RICHARD BLOOM, STEVE BECKEN, LISA STADE, NORMA NELSON

Staff:

Gloria Boyce, Kevin Hebdon, Tony Kalmbach, Katherine Ostrom, Jerry Otto, Christy Watts, Rob Orvis, Paul Holgate, Christine DeVere, Kevin Sliger, Patrick Roach, Michaela Dimas/Scribe

3. Pledge of Allegiance

CHAIRMAN WATKINS invited PAUL PARISH 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.

Barb Hays read a personal recognition of employment to those present at the Board meeting. She began her career as a coach operator at Ben Franklin Transit in 1987 and finished at the top of her training class. During her first years at transit, she drove mostly school and commuter runs which drove around to power plant #2 at Hanford. She enjoyed the passengers very much and had 14 years of accident-free driving. Barb also worked as a relief dispatcher and later on as an operator trainer. In 1996, she was one of a two-person team along with Dan Schmidt to be honored on the Wall of Fame at the Washington State Transit Association State Conference in Spokane, the first BFT employees to receive that recognition. Barb was accepted and graduated from Leadership Tri-Cities in 2008 and was also the first graduate of Leadership APTA for BFT that year. In June of 2003, Barb graduated cum laude with a Bachelor's degree in Business. The former Operations Manager retired that year in July, and in August she became the first female Operations Manager. During her 28 ½ year career at BFT, she didn't always accomplish her goals the first time, but she did not give up easily and is proud of her accomplishments. She loves her work and loves the people who made the Operations department a great success. It has been her privilege to manage the department for the past 13 years.

5. Approval of Agenda

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated that he is not aware of any changes to the agenda and called for a motion.

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

6. “Connecting Our Community” Art Poster Contest Recognitions

- A. Grand Prize Winners
3rd Prize – Haylee Smith – Prosser HS – Teacher: Kila Sayers-Smith

- 2nd Prize – Daniel Purdy – Kamiakin HS – Teacher Anna Haines
- 1st Prize – Joshua Mallari – Prosser HS – Teacher: Kila Saylers-Smith

David Parra, Customer Service Representative and Travel Trainer, stated that he had the privilege of implementing the 2015 Art Poster Contest. The contest was a great success, with students participating from Prosser to the Tri-Cities and everywhere in between, and even including some home schoolers this year. Just some of the entries have been posted here around the Board room. The BFT Board of Directors was able to narrow the entries down to three winners.

Similar to last year’s contest, all the public and private schools in BFT’s service area were contacted to participate in the contest. Participation was free, and BFT provided schools with everything they needed to get started: instruction packets, poster paper, and colored pencils. The theme for this year was “Connecting Our Community,” and students were all encouraged to be creative in how they interpreted the theme for their artwork.

After collecting and narrowing down the entries to the top 16, the Board chose the following three individuals’ art pieces as winners:

- 3rd Prize – Haylee Smith – Prosser HS – Teacher: Kila Saylers-Smith
- 2nd Prize – Daniel Purdy – Kamiakin HS – Teacher Anna Haines
- 1st Prize – Joshua Mallari – Prosser HS – Teacher: Kila Saylers-Smith

The Board applauded the winners for their achievement.

B. Calendar Spot Winners

David Parra, Customer Service Representative and Travel Trainer, stated that thirteen additional entries to the 2015 Art Poster Contest were selected to be a part of a 16-month calendar:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Geraldine Enriquez – Southridge HS | Ashley Heath – Southridge HS |
| Hannah Johnson – Prosser HS | Amber Perry – Kamiakin HS |
| Carrie Christensen – Southridge HS | Katelin Killoy – Pasco HS |
| Lucera Cox – Kamiakin HS | Elena Trenchard – Carmichael HS |
| Luther Ozuna – Prosser HS | Brenna Homer – Kamiakin HS |
| Margaret Pederson – Carmichael MS | Brittney Cox – Kamiakin HS |
| Katherine Krzyzanek – Southridge HS | |

CHAIRMAN WATKINS and the Board of Directors presented the third, second, and third prizes to the teachers and students who were present, and a commemorative photo was taken of the artists and teachers with the winning art pieces.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated that the Board is looking forward to a fourth year of this contest program. STEVE BECKEN commented that the artists from Prosser have set the bar high for two years in a row. The Board thanked both staff and all the contest participants for a job well done.

7. Board Committee Reports

A. Planning & Marketing Committee

RICHARD BLOOM stated that the Committee went through a staff discussion of the draft Title VI report, which is also included as a presentation on tonight’s Board meeting agenda. The Title VI draft

will be going out for public review, and comments and requests will then come back before the Board. The Committee also went through upcoming bid proposals, a sales tax report, and a report on the PTBAs and local jurisdictions, which are all included in the meeting minutes in the Board packet.

B. Operations & Maintenance Committee

RICK MILLER stated that he was absent during the prior week’s Committee meeting, but that all the information is included in the meeting minutes. He added that five of the issues discussed during the meeting are included on the Consent Agenda tonight.

C. Administration & Finance Committee

STEVE BECKEN stated that a discussion was held on the Washington State Auditor’s Accountability Audit Report, present in tonight’s agenda as an Action Item. The Committee also discussed the CAC, an update on General Manager recruitment, and the usual sales tax reports.

8. Consent Agenda

- A. Special Board Visioning Meeting Minutes of February 11, 2016
- B. Meeting Minutes of February 11, 2016 Regular Board Meeting
- C. Payroll/Voucher Summary
- D. Resolution 13-2016 The Arc of Tri-Cities Contract Extension
- E. Resolution 14-2016 The Arc of Tri-Cities Limited Mode Service Provider Contract Extension
- F. Resolution 15-2016 TC Transportation Services, LLC Contracted Services Contract Extension
- G. Resolution 16-2016 Recommending ABM Janitorial Services to be Awarded the Janitorial Service Contract
- H. Resolution 17-2016 Authorizing the Interim General Manager to Release Proposals for Radio Maintenance Service

February 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 March 5, 2016.

Payroll

Check Register Number	Check Number/ Number	Date of Issue	in the Amount	
502-16	77955 77989	2/5/2016	360,753.04	Payroll
503-16	77990 78023	2/19/2016	361,736.97	Payroll
			Total	\$722,490.01

Non-Payroll Vouchers

117-16	60077 60140	2/5/2016	446,012.36	Mdse
118-16	ACH Transactions	2/8/2016	143,322.42	ACH TRANS
119-16	60141 60146	2/8/2016	17,946.51	Mdse
120-16	60147 60210	2/11/2016	150,861.96	Mdse

121-16	VOID	59789	2/16/2016	(78.59)	VOID LM
122-16	ACH Transactions		2/15/2016	92,082.01	ACH TRANS
123-16	ACH Transactions		2/17/2016	1,363.39	ACH TRANS
124-16	60211	60294	2/19/2016	197,691.28	Mdse
125-16	60295	60295	2/19/2016	376.54	Mdse
126-16	60296	60307	2/22/2016	124,390.56	Mdse
127-16	ACH Transactions		2/23/2016	233,097.90	ACH TRANS
128-16	60308	60372	2/26/2016	118,557.66	Mdse
129-16	60373	60373	2/29/2016	4,545.95	Mdse
130-16	ACH Transactions		2/19/2016	1,307.88	Mdse
				Total	\$1,531,477.83

Check Register Numbers 500-16 to 501-16 and 100-16 to 116-16
In the total amount of:

\$2,253,967.84

CHAIRMAN WATKINS read the list of Consent Agenda items aloud and called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Items A–H, including the slightly revised February Meeting Minutes.

ACTION: RICHARD BLOOM made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Items A–H, and LISA STADE seconded. No discussion. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

9. Action Items

A. Resolution 18-2016 Receive and File the WA State Auditor’s Office 2014 Accountability Audit Report

Kevin Hebdon, Interim Administrative Services Manager, read from the memorandum and stated that the Washington State Auditor’s Office (SAO) began the 2014 Accountability Audit at Ben Franklin Transit in mid-December 2015. In an Accountability Audit, the SAO assesses the management, use, and safeguarding of public resources to ensure there is protection from misuse and misappropriations. They also evaluate whether there is reasonable assurance for adherence to applicable state laws, regulations, policies, and procedures. Specifically the SAO selected to review payroll, vendor payments, insurance, PCI compliance, and third party cash receipting for the fiscal year 2014. An Audit Entrance Conference was held on December 22, 2015. The SAO has completed their review and held an Audit Exit Conference on February 26, 2016 to discuss the audit results, which Director BOB KOCH attended. Their report, included in the Board packet, notes no significant deficiencies or non-compliance with laws, regulations, policies, and procedures.

Staff recommends the Board receive and file the SAO’s 2014 Accountability Audit Report.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS asked how many years in a row it has been for a clean audit. Kevin Hebdon replied 3 years.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS congratulated the staff for their achievement and thanked them for their hard work. Kevin Hebdon added that it takes the whole agency in a team effort to achieve this, not just the accounting and finance department. Everyone’s efforts are appreciated.

ACTION: RICHARD BLOOM moved to approve Resolution 18-2016, and RICK MILLER seconded. No discussion. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Resolution 19-2016 Authorizing Staff to Release the Draft Title VI for Comment and Public Hearing

Tony Kalmbach, Planning & Service Development manager, gave a slideshow presentation on the Draft Title VI update. He stated that in 2013, when BFT became a large urbanized area, the agency was then required to implement a detailed Title VI program. The Title VI program is updated every 3 years as part of the process, so this update is for the 2016-2019 Title VI program and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) program. The Title VI program demonstrates provisions of the Title VI Civil Rights Act of 1964 to ensure that services are operated in a way that they're not discriminating against anybody based on race, color, nation of origin or income level. It also addresses environmental injustices so that if any capital projects are put into place, there are guidelines for staff to follow to make sure that services and amenities are distributed properly. It also addresses improving access to persons with limited English proficiency and evaluates BFT's fare and major service changes.

Three service policies which were adopted as part of the 2013 Title VI document include the major service change policy, the disparate impact policy, and the disproportionate burden policy. These policies put a threshold in place for the agency so that when major changes are made to service, service and fair equity analysis must be conducted to make sure that adverse effects are not being caused for any low income or minority individuals.

For the Title VI 2016 update, staff has performed racial demographic analysis, low income analysis, and languages spoken demographic analysis. These are done as part of the threshold that states when a certain population of people that speak another language exceeds the threshold, then BFT has to review printed media to make sure that that it is available in that language. Staff will also be adding some language assistance line flyers so that customers can call and utilize translation services and more Title VI training for BFT employees. There were no major service changes or policy updates in the 2016-2019 Title VI update.

BFT has system wide service standards in place which were implemented in 2013. Some of the current standards include a vehicle load factor of 1.25, which states that buses must have fewer than 25% of their total number of passengers standing. If 25% or more are standing, BFT would have an overflow bus come and assist that route. There is also a vehicle headway standard for each route, and those headways are based upon ridership demand, market potential, productivity, and development. On-time performance standards for each mode are currently from 0 to 5 minutes for fixed route and 0 to 15 minutes for Dial-A-Ride. Staff monitors all this data, and that data is then compiled and submitted that as part of the Title VI document to the FTA.

BFT also has a service availability standard, which states that BFT has committed to a half mile walking distance from its routes in terms of the service availability for the community. According to current analysis, the PTBA population is approximately 246,000, and based upon the half mile standard, staff estimates about 82% coverage. In other words, 204,000 people out of the 246,000 total are within a half mile of a BFT bus stop. Since taxi feeder services are also available, it assists in increasing coverage for the PTBA and giving partial access to fixed route services. Staff also ensures that new equipment is equitably distributed throughout the service area as part of its quarterly analysis so that older equipment is not being sent to run disproportionately in lower income areas.

The limited English proficiency (LEP) portion of the document states that staff will take reasonable steps to allow access to services for the part of the community that may not speak English as a primary

language. BFT exceeds these expectations as Google translate is available on the website, language assistance services are provided, and all media is made available in Spanish. All commercials and advertisements for public hearings, route changes, or any major announcements are all done in both English and Spanish.

Staff recommends the release of the Draft Title VI for 30-day public comment. After holding public hearings and gathering comments from the community, staff will bring those before the Board.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS commented that this is a very descriptive process that staff is going through. He asked if there is anything staff has learned so far along the way. Tony Kalmbach replied that he and other staff attended Title VI training in December, and it was beneficial to brainstorm ideas with other agencies and see what they're doing. That is where staff received the idea to give flyers to staff since they are the folks who have face-to-face contact with customers. It is great to have those opportunities to see what other transit agencies are doing and see how BFT can use those ideas to better serve the community.

ACTION: RICHARD BLOOM mad a motion to approve Resolution 19-2016, and LISA STADE seconded. No discussion. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

C. Committee Finalization

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated that although the Board discussed Committee member assignments for the 2016 calendar year during the last meeting, there have been some bylaw issues with the number of Board members on each of the different Committees. After speaking with TERRY CHRISTENSEN, he will remain on the Operations & Maintenance Committee with the understanding that he may serve as an alternate on the Administration & Finance Committee should one of the three Committee members be absent from a meeting. PAUL PARISH will be on the Planning & Marketing Committee, and he's going to try to work with his schedule to make it work.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS proposed to leave the Committees as they have been, with PAUL PARISH on the Planning & Marketing Committee and TERRY CHRISTENSEN on the Operations & Maintenance Committee while serving as an alternate on the Administration & Finance Committee.

ACTION: RICHARD BLOOM made a motion to approve the 2016 Committee member assignments. LISA STADE seconded. No discussion. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS added that there will be another opportunity at the beginning of 2017 to rearrange assignments if necessary.

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

10. Discussion/Information Items

CHAIRMAN WATKINS added an Item D to the Discussion agenda for an update on the General Manager search with the Board's permission.

- A. Citizens Advisory Committee February 2016 Report – No Report
- B. Citizens Advisory Committee Update

Christy Watts, Marketing and Customer Service Manager, presented a short slideshow presentation on the ongoing CAC review and stated that since there have been some delays in the process, a new timeline for the review has been created. Newly elected officers are temporary until the review is completed. Staff is in the process of researching and reviewing other transit industry's best practices and is also assessing the BFT standing rules, bylaws, and application for membership. BFT CAC members have been asked to submit ideas for discussion at the March 14 CAC meeting.

The revised timeline is to receive input from the CAC on March 14, report preliminary findings to the Administration & Finance Committee on April 7, and make recommendations to staff and the CAC on May 9. Final recommendations will be made during the June Board cycle and will go out for tentative public review on June 15. Adoption will occur during the August Board cycle, and afterwards the new standards will be implemented from August through October.

C. Comprehensive Service Plan Study Update

Tony Kalmbach, Planning & Service Development Manager, introduced Manuel Soto from Walkability & Mobility as the presenter of the monthly update regarding the ongoing Comprehensive Service Plan Study. Manuel Soto gave a slideshow presentation and stated that the service planning workshop to be held with staff has been rescheduled to March 21. It will be an all-day workshop held until 5:00 p.m., and discussion will be held on how the BFT system is going to be redesigned. Consulting staff is producing an analysis in preparation for that. This will be a continuation of the exercises that were performed with the Board last month during the Board Visioning session. Every route in the system will be analyzed in detail and will result in a sketch of a redesign for the system, and that information will be used to come up with a full set of recommendations for service change.

The recommendations will be presented to the community from May 18 to 21 during a second round of open houses. Originally, staff wanted to hold these in April, but due to time constraints, it was decided to push the open houses back a month. The format will be similar to the first round of open houses. Six evening sessions will be held from May 18 to 20, one in each community, with one morning session held on Saturday morning, May 21. The open houses will last for about 3 hours, and most of them will be held at the same locations as before. A couple of locations are under review, however, and some changes might be made; for example, the open house in Pasco may be held at City Hall rather than at Columbia Basin College again.

In terms of presentation format, staff wants to create a presentation of what is being proposed so people can understand the principles behind it and the proposal itself. Afterwards, there will be a discussion session. The presentation will be held at least twice during the evening so that everyone has the opportunity to hear the presentation. Staff is going to promote the open houses using the same outreach methods as before but will do a bit more on the electronic promotion side through providing more materials on the project website. In this way, people can actually access the materials before they attend the open houses.

The remaining project schedule is as follows:

- April 2016 – Make preliminary service recommendations on fixed-route network scenarios and implications/approach for Dial-A-Ride, Taxi and Vanpool services
- May 2016 – Refine service recommendations and multimodal strategy that will be presented to public during open houses
- June 2016 – Present an update on feedback received at open houses and revisions to service recommendations

- July 2016 – Present final comprehensive service plan recommendations and release the service plan for a 60-day review period
- September 2016 – Present an update on feedback received during 60-day review period and any revisions to service plan
- October 2016 – Present final Comprehensive Service Plan Study for adoption
- October through April 2017 – Implementation of the service plan

LISA STADE mentioned a couple ways which staff could utilize to promote the open houses in Benton City, such as sending email notices through City Hall or including the information on the water bill sent to out at the beginning of each month. Manuel Soto replied that staff would follow up on getting in contact with the cities for promotion of the open houses.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS thanked staff for the update.

D. General Manager Search Update

Patrick Roach, Legal Counsel, stated that Prothman sent out advertisements for the General Manager position and received a number of responses: about 26 or 27 applicants. Prothman went through all the background information in the applications along with the letters of recommendation, and they narrowed the applicants down to five primary and five alternate candidates that they thought would make a good bit. The hiring committee created specifically for the General Manager search met with Prothman two days ago, went through the information, and made some selections internally among the primary and alternate candidates. An interview schedule for those three to five candidates will be released within the next day or two. The Board will be given some questions to ask the candidates and will also have the chance to ask any other questions in order to take a good look on how each particular candidate might fit the position. After that, a selection will be made at the following Board meeting. There is a possibility that the need for more negotiations or tweaking the contract could delay the announcement of a determination.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS asked Kevin Hebdon, Interim Administrative Services Manager, about the potential dates for the community session and interview panels. Kevin Hebdon replied that the dates have been set. On March 22, two community receptions will be held: from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Three Rivers Transit Center and 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the BFT Board meeting room. This will be a chance for the community and drivers and operators alike to greet the final candidates. The following day, on March 23, the Board panel and an internal panel of staff will interview those finalists starting at about 8:30 a.m., and afterwards the finalists will be given a tour of the site. CHAIRMAN WATKINS added that this is what the hiring committee wants to recommend to the Board for moving forward. The committee has a list of very qualified candidates but cannot name names yet since they have yet to be asked if they want or will be able to participate in the final interview process. March 22 and 23 are very important days, and hopefully the Board will be able to fully attend. Conceivably, a decision might be reached by Wednesday, March 23, but as Patrick Roach mentioned, the hiring committee and the staff panel may need to deliberate on that.

Patrick Roach stated that it is very important for the Board to set March 23 aside because a quorum is needed for the interview process, and hopefully everyone will be able to be a part of it. Interviews will likely place until about 2:00 or 3:00 in the afternoon, and there may be some deliberations that occur after that, so if possible, the Board members should try to have the entire day on their calendars. The candidates are all being advised of these dates as well. CHAIRMAN WATKINS added the specific hours and schedule will be sorted out.

A brief discussion was held on the process undergone to lead up to this point in the hiring process.

STEVE BECKEN asked for clarification on whether the entire Board was needed for the interview on March 23 or just the hiring panel members. CHAIRMAN WATKINS clarified that it is for all the voting members of the Board who would be able to attend as it published meeting time.

LISA STADE asked that if a Board member was not able to make it during the day for the interview process, would it still be ideal for all Board members to be available for the final discussion process after 4:00 p.m. CHAIRMAN WATKINS commented that it might be possible to tailor the latter portion of the day that happens at 4:00 p.m. Staff will work on the details of the schedule. Kevin Hebdon added that staff can work with whatever the hiring committee and the Board decide.

BOB KOCH mentioned that the Franklin County Commissioners Board Meeting would be held on March 22 from 9:00 a.m. to about 12:00 p.m. CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated that the meeting is not required, but encouraged as many as possible to attend.

11. Staff Reports & Comments

A. Legal Report

Patrick Roach, Legal Counsel, stated that there are no new legal matters to bring to the Board's attention.

B. Boarding Report

Kevin Sliger, Transit Planner, highlighted the new format of the boarding report and stated that Vanpool ridership is now an estimate from the Vanpool department. Previously, the numbers that were presented were based on data which was collected by the customers themselves. The Dial-A-Ride mode has been moved to the bottom of the list of services as a decrease in Dial-A-Ride ridership isn't necessarily a bad sign. As time goes on, staff hopes to persuade Dial-A-Ride riders to use BFT's other modes of transportation. This can be achieved by promoting the travel training program and providing more ADA accessible services.

For the January 2016 report, ridership is down 13.2% for Fixed Route, 2.1% for Taxi Service, 5.6% for Vanpool, and 7.2% for Dial-A-Ride. Total ridership is down 11.6%, and part of this decline can be attributed to the fact that January 2016 had one less service day than January 2015. This accounts for about 4 to 5% of the decline. Additionally, staff speculates that the decline continues to be correlated with falling fuel prices and other economic factors.

C. Treasurer's/Budget/Sales Tax Reports

Kevin Hebdon, Interim Administrative Services Manager, stated that revenues for January 2016 are down 1.3% from the budgeted amount, which is the equivalent of \$30,000. Total operating expenditures are down 15.9% or about \$350,000 under budget. There is nothing of significance to note on the charts for allocated cost per boarding and fares per boarding.

For the treasurer's report for the end of February, the fund balance is at \$27.8 million, of which \$8.4 million has been set aside by the Board for 3 months' operating reserves. Another \$2 million is set aside for capital local match requirements, bringing the amount down to \$17.3 million in surplus funds.

As a reminder, staff has changed reporting methods for sales tax to the Board to the month of activity rather than the month received in order to align better with accounting practices. For sales tax for

December activity, BFT received 0.4% more than what was received at this time in the prior year. 2015 total sales tax revenues are 2.1% above the annual budgeted amount which was revised mid-year. The YTD totals are 10.1% higher for 2015 than YTD 2014. The PTBA and local jurisdiction information is included in the Board packet and was discussed during the Administration & Finance Committee.

D. General Manager's Report

Gloria Boyce, Interim General Manager, stated that on the federal level, Director RICHARD BLOOM, Tony Kalmbach, and she will be attending the APTA Legislative Conference next week in Washington, D.C. A full schedule is planned from Sunday through Wednesday, including appointments with Senator Cantwell's staff, Senator Murray's staff, and Representative Newhouse.

The Board was presented with marketing material to be left at the various offices as well as the Hanford Advisory Board advice that will be shared at the conference.

Gloria Boyce continued and stated that today is the last day of the session occurring at the state level. Staff has not yet heard about where things have ended up, particularly in regards to the supplemental transportation budget.

All operations ran smoothly during the past month with no missed pullouts. A number of staff attended technical training in February, and Planning and Finance department staff attended the national database training which staff is required to complete annually. Planning staff also attended a GIS class so that BFT will have the capability to use geographical information in some of our route information. Operations supervisory staff attended accidents and incidents reporting training this past month. This is a good start on further professional development.

With the retirement of Andrew Tillman in December, BFT now has a new Road Supervisor, Rick Sanders, who is present at this evening's meeting. He is now the appointed representative for the Franklin County Emergency Management and Benton County Emergency Services team. He is currently in review and will be working with council in the future to update BFT's mutual master agreements and local agreements with those agencies.

12. Board Member Comments

NORMA NELSON thanked those in attendance for coming. If one wants to understand how the system works, the best way to do that is by sitting in at Board meetings.

LISA STADE stated that this Saturday, the Revitalization Committee is having a fundraiser called "So you Think You Can Dance?" in Benton City. Benton City Board members are going to be judges, prior Board members have taken dancing lessons, and people that are associated with the community are going to dance. There will also be wine and appetizers. Tickets are \$15 each, and it was a sold-out event last year, so it should be a fun time. Things are going well at Benton City with the three new Board members, and all spots have been filled for the Planning Committee. There is even a person waiting in case there is an opening in one of the committee positions.

STEVE BECKEN stated that Prosser has a new city manager. He is a young man from Oregon who has not been a city manager or administrator before, so this will be a good learning experience for him. He is enthusiastic about the job.

BOB KOCH stated that all the work that staff has done is appreciated. The professionalism of staff shows. The Board also welcomes Michaela Dimas back.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated that firstly, Pasco will be doing its biannual retreat in a week or two, during goals will be set for the next two years. Pasco and the other cities look forward to transit also participating as they redo their goals and updates. Secondly, 2016 is potentially a year of change for transit and the way things are operating, and while it is a little bit scary, it is also exciting. There is a lot of potential in this agency which has provided service for about 35 years to evolve into an agency that will continue to provide service for the next 35 years. 2016 is going to be one of those years where the Board and staff will have to hold onto those hats for the ride and stay involved.

PAUL PARISH stated that Kennewick had a report the other evening at council in regards to Vista Field, and that went very well. The council endorsed the master plan, and while it will need to be revisited and tweaked some more, it looks good. Senator Brown has had the LRF approved, and now the governor just has to sign it, so hopefully council can do with Vista Field like it did with Southridge and get it kicked off and moving. That was the only time that the state gave back the taxpayer's money to finance on the LRF, so hopefully we can do that again, to the tune of about \$500,000. The last link in Steptoe should be started here within the next month and will hopefully be finished by this fall. He stated that on another side note, he sits on the Law & Justice Committee, and they just kicked off the mental health court which is huge. They're a month ahead of time, and they did a fantastic job, so hopefully that will keep about 50% of the people with mental health problems out of jail and gets them in place they need to be.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS added a welcome for PAUL PARISH to the BFT Board of Directors and acknowledged that he had previously served as an alternate.

RICK MILLER stated that procedures are going normally as always. The art contest that the kids do is really great. It is exciting to see their faces as they come up here to get their pictures taken for those awards.

RICHARD BLOOM stated that West Richland is going through its comprehensive plan update for the city. West Richland was named the best city for longevity of people to live in their houses and also for the sellability of their houses. That was announced by the former mayor of Richland, so that recognition is appreciated. As discussed, he will be back in Washington D.C. next week.

**13. Next Meeting – Thursday, April 10, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.
1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland WA**

14. Executive Session

No Executive Session held.

15. Adjournment

CHAIRMAN WATKINS adjourned the Regular Board of Directors meeting at 8:17 p.m.

Meeting recorded by:
Michaela Dimas, Executive Assistant & Clerk of the Board
March 10, 2016