

**BEN FRANKLIN TRANSIT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, January 14, 2016/7:00 p.m.
1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland, WA**

1. Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call: BOB KOCH (Vice Chair), JIM BEAVER, RICK MILLER, RICHARD BLOOM, STEVE BECKEN, LISA STADE, CHRIS LILLYBLADE

Staff:

Gloria Boyce, Kevin Hebdon, Tony Kalmbach, Jerry Otto, Barb Hays, Terry DeJuan, Rob Orvis, Tom Turner, Christine DeVere, Paul Holgate, David Parra, Angela Stringer, Patrick Roach, Angela Sorensen/Scribe

3. Pledge of Allegiance

VICE CHAIR KOCH invited those in attendance to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Citizens Public Comment/Introduction of Visitors

VICE CHAIR KOCH invited introductions of guests or public comment on any item not on the agenda.

No public comment or introductions were given.

5. Approval of Agenda

VICE CHAIR KOCH asked Staff if they were aware of any changes to the agenda. No changes had been made.

No Board Member asked for any item on the Agenda to be changed or any additional items added. VICE CHAIR KOCH then moved on to the next Agenda item.

6. Retirement Recognition

- A. Resolution 01-2016 – Andrew Tillman, Operations Supervisor
May 10, 1982 – December 9, 2015

Barb Hays, Operations Manager, presented an overview of Andrew Tillman’s career at BFT. Andrew has worked for BFT since its inception in 1982 as one of the original coach operators. He brought experience from his work in California and served as a dispatcher for a short time, but he was quickly promoted to Operations Supervisor in 1983. Andrew was recognized in 2002 and 2011, respectively, as Employee of the Year in the team category for the Operations team and as Employee of the Year in the individual category. He has admirable dedication to BFT, working extra hours to cover important events and shifts for other supervisors when asked. Over the past 32 years, he has served BFT and the community compassionately and effectively. His intelligence, consistency, and positive attitude have made him one of the go-to people for his past knowledge and historical perspective on the transit. He will be missed for the wisdom and kindness he always showed to everyone.

VICE CHAIR KOCH called for a motion to the resolution.

ACTION: RICK MILLER made a motion to approve Resolution 01-2016, Retirement of Andrew Tillman, and STEVE BECKEN seconded. No discussion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Resolution 02-2016 – Steve Alexander, Coach Operator
February 16, 1997 – November 20, 2015

Barb Hays, Operations Manager, presented an overview of Steve Alexander’s career at BFT. He began his career in 1997 as a coach operator, hired by Operations Manager Jim Wetzel. Steve proudly and effectively served the amalgamated transit unit as a trainer for many years, serving alongside long-time driver Steve Nelson, who has also recently retired. Through the years, Steve’s work ethic and diligence served as an example to all who worked with him. He is a 16-year recipient of the national safe driver’s award, which is an outstanding achievement. During his 19-year career, Steve had only three late reports and averaged only two sick days per year. He is a dependable asset to BFT and the operations team.

ACTION: RICK MILLER made a motion to approve Resolution 02-2016, Retirement of Steve Alexander, and STEVE BECKEN seconded. No discussion. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Steve Alexander was present at the Board Meeting. The Board congratulated him on his retirement and presented him with a certificate and a lifetime bus pass. Steve Alexander thanked the Board and stated that it’s been a wonderful 19 years.

7. Board Committee Reports

No reports due to cancellations for all January Committee Meetings.

8. Consent Agenda

- A. Meeting Minutes of December 10, 2015 Regular Board Meeting
- B. Payroll/Voucher Summary

December 2015 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 January 8, 2015.

Payroll

Check Register Number	Check Number/ Number	Date of Issue	in the Amount	
586-15	77802 77843	12/11/2015	360,082.85	Payroll
587-15	77844 77844	12/11/2015	644.52	Payroll
588-15	77845 77882	12/24/2015	360,445.15	Payroll
			Total	\$721,172.52

Non-Payroll Vouchers

243-15	59503	59560	12/4/2015	730,048.81	Mdse
244-15	59561	59561	12/8/2015	150.00	Mdse
245-15	59562	59625	12/11/2015	187,617.93	Mdse
246-15	59626	59630	12/14/2015	12,371.64	Mdse
247-15	ACH Transactions		12/14/2015	139,991.36	ACH TRANS
248-15	59631	59695	12/17/2015	219,867.08	Mdse
249-15	ACH Transactions		12/11/2015	50,525.60	ACH TRANS
250-15	59696	59748	12/25/2015	168,520.22	Mdse
251-15	59749	59760	12/28/2015	80,456.29	Mdse
252-15	ACH Transactions		12/29/2015	278,473.83	ACH TRANS
253-15	59761	59806	12/30/2015	145,011.84	Mdse
254-15	59807	59807	12/31/2015	475.59	Mdse
				Total	\$2,013,510.19

Check Register Numbers 586-15 to 588-15 and 243-15 to 254-15
 In the total amount of:

\$2,734,682.71

ACTION: STEVE BECKEN made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, Items A–B, and RICK MILLER 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 03-2016 – Authorization for the Interim General Manager to Exercise Option with R.E. Powell for Bulk Fuel Delivery

Jerry Otto, Maintenance Manager, stated that BFT’s buses, Dial-A-Ride vehicles, Vanpool vans, and service vehicles require weekly deliveries of bulk diesel and gasoline. R.E. Powell Distributing has been supplying bulk fuel to BFT since March 2, 2014 under the current contract. The contract is set to end on March 2, 2016, unless the three-year option included in the contract is utilized. The delivery fees for years three through five would remain at the current level with no price increase.

It is Staff’s recommendation to exercise the additional three years contract option with R.E. Powell Distributing.

STEVE BECKEN asked that if gas prices continue to drop, will BFT’s price also go down, or is it locked in at that price for three years. Rob Orvis explained that the contract is set up on OPIS daily prices and will match what the branded price for gasoline is on the day of delivery.

VICE CHAIR KOCH called for a motion to the resolution.

ACTION: RICHARD BLOOM made a motion to approve Resolution 03-2016 and STEVE BECKEN seconded. No discussion. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Resolution 04-2016 – Authorization to Release a Request for Proposals for Janitorial Services

Jerry Otto, Maintenance Manager, stated that ABM Janitorial Services has provided janitorial services for BFT's maintenance and operations facility, 3 Rivers Transit Center, and the Prosser Dial-A-Ride office since April 1, 2011. The contract is in its final year and requires BFT to conduct a formal request for proposal. Pending Board approval, Staff will release an RFP in January 2016 and advertise locally for interested consultants. Staff will notify the Board of proposals submitted and make a recommendation to award in March 2016.

It is Staff's recommendation to authorize the Interim General Manager to release a Request for Proposal for janitorial services.

ACTION: RICHARD BLOOM made a motion to approve Resolution 04-2016 and JIM BEAVER seconded. No discussion. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

10. Discussion/Information Items

A. Citizens Advisory Committee December 2015 Report

RICHARD BLOOM offered to present a report on the latest CAC meeting. He stated that the Committee brought in nomination recommendations for the CAC process and the election of temporary CAC officers. A round-table discussion was also held. He added that he found attending the meeting very useful.

VICE CHAIR KOCH thanked him for the report.

B. Art Poster Contest Update

David Parra, Customer Service Representative and Travel Trainer, stated that he had the privilege of conducting BFT's 3rd annual poster contest this year. Over 550 contest entries were accepted from October 12 to November 6. Staff has selected the top 16 entries as presented in the slideshow. The first place winner will receive a bicycle and a \$500 certificate for his or her school's art program. The second and third place students will each receive \$100 to continue their art endeavors and \$250 for their school art programs.

Staff would like to invite the Board to stay 15 minutes after the Board meeting to help in selecting the 3 winners out of the top 16 entries.

The Board agreed to stay after the meeting to help select the contest winners.

C. Planning & Service Development Report

Tony Kalmbach, Planning & Service Development Manager, gave a slideshow presentation and stated that since September, staff from the Planning & Service Development department have been going out in the community and working with the different planning commissions to get a better understanding of how each of the cities are growing. Staff has also been looking at reports to see how the cities in the area are developing so that transit can be better prepared when at the meeting table in order to put BFT's best services on the road. In working with the community and the planning commissions, BFT has been able to build collaboration and foster partnerships between agencies.

Tony presented short updates of the current affairs for each of the various cities, planning commissions, and ports in the area. Most of the city governments are currently working on their 2017 Comprehensive Plans and are working hard to anticipate and accommodate growth and development across the area. There is a lot of great economic development going on among the ports of Benton, Kennewick, and Pasco.

Overall, the support of BFT by the community has been positive. There has been a lot of enthusiasm for BFT's presence at meetings and the ongoing Comprehensive Service Plan Study. It has allowed staff to have some conversations with other agencies about how we can improve service and how we can be at the table in the future as planning occurs. Conversations were held about BFT's particular involvement and role in the Vista Fields, Columbia Drive, and Richland Riverfront developments. Comments from city staff indicate that they are interested in traffic reduction, which is something transit can definitely help accomplish by taking single occupants in vehicles off the road. There are many great opportunities through these interactions, and BFT staff will continue to attend these meetings on a regular basis.

VICE CHAIR KOCH thanked Tony Kalmbach for the good report.

D. Port of Kennewick-Columbia Drive Shelter Partnership

Tony Kalmbach, Planning & Service Development Manager, gave a slideshow presentation on the Columbia Drive Shelter Partnership project. The Port of Kennewick approached BFT to join a creative partnership between the City of Kennewick, the Port of Kennewick, the Arts Commission, and BFT to work together to create a unique public amenity down in the Columbia Drive area where the wine village will be built. An artist has been hired by the Port of Kennewick to put into place a unique shelter and art combination that would be next to the wine area to hopefully draw more art into the community. There are going to be a lot of art and landscaping projects for that area, so Staff thought it was a great opportunity for BFT to be at the table and show commitment to working with our community and participating in this.

Tony presented pictures of the shelter concept art to the Board and explained the proposed features of its construction.

The next steps are to create inter-local agreements identifying roles of all the agencies involved. The Port of Kennewick will work with the artist and commission a contract, while the City of Kennewick will complete street upgrades, including paving, trees, electrical work, and general infrastructure work. The upgrades are anticipated to be complete in spring or early summer 2016, and the construction on the shelter will be complete in fall 2016.

E. Comprehensive Service Plan Study Update

Manuel Soto, coordinator of the Comprehensive Service Plan Study from Walkability & Mobility Consulting, presented a slideshow detailing the latest updates of the study. He stated that staff is currently in the midst of the first round of open houses. Advertisements were run in the newspaper, TV, and on the radio, and staff worked hard to reach out to a number of communities. Tony Kalmbach, Planning & Service Development Manager, added that staff placed about 100 posters across the Tri-Cities at major gathering areas such as grocery centers, major shopping areas, libraries, community centers, and on BFT buses. Staff was very diligent in making this open to the public to get as much involvement as possible because of how crucial an aspect the open houses are in gathering feedback.

Manuel Soto continued and reiterated that the first round of open houses was mostly about learning from the community and listening to their needs and complaints. During an open house, the floor is open for

questions and discussion after a presentation about the overview of BFT's services is given. Materials are also provided to attendees, including a comment card to use to fill out specific comments. The attendees' contact information is also gathered in order to perform follow-up.

Manuel Soto presented maps as part of the slideshow which illustrate statistical data taken from the fixed route census, included in the informational packet provided to the Board. Staff has made great efforts in understanding BFT's family of services for the system performance review. Data has been gathered for the fixed route, taxi, and Dial-A-Ride services. Manuel Soto went on to provide examples of the statistical data compilation charts and graphs that the Board can expect to receive in relation to the data findings on BFT.

On February 11, the Board Visioning Session will be held at 3:30 p.m. The main goal of the exercise is to obtain direction from the Board on how to grow service in the future and adjust or modify service accordingly for their goals. The session will help staff identify some scenarios or general strategies on how to organize future service. Staff will present an overview of the main findings of the ongoing service performance review as well as some of the Board's system-wide service goals which retain BFT's mission: cost-effective transportation services, support livable communities, promote sustainable development, and exceed customer expectations. The goal will also be to polish BFT's service policies and performance standards for services. Priorities will also be a focal point of discussion, such as the balance between coverage and productivity or the access to service versus the frequency of service.

After the Board Visioning Session in February, service planning scenarios will be presented in March, the second round of open houses will be held in April, and the Draft Comprehensive Service Plan will be presented in May.

VICE CHAIR KOCH asked if there will be a summary presented on public comments so far during next month's visioning meeting. Manuel Soto replied yes, and the Board will also hear a summary of comments from BFT Staff as well.

RICHARD BLOOM asked about the turnout of the open houses the prior day. Manuel Soto replied that yesterday was a slow day, with 3 people at Richland and 1 at Prosser. Today, there were 20 people in attendance at Pasco and 4 at Benton City.

LISA STADE asked if City Hall was informed of the open houses during the advertisement stage. Manuel Soto replied that yes, staff did reach out to City Hall. LISA STADE suggested having City Hall advertise the information for the second round of open houses on the reader board in order to make sure those who drive through the main part of town will see the information. Gloria Boyce added that one of the attendees in Benton City was the Chair of the Chamber of Commerce who came to let staff know they were being preempted and that they are welcome to come back out in April.

F. 2016 Draft Board Member Roster, Activity Calendar, Standing Committees

The Board briefly discussed the 2016 Draft Board Member Roster, included in the Board packet. It is still unknown who the new Board member from Kennewick will be.

Angela Sorensen, ADA Coordinator and stand-in for Michaela Dimas, asked the Board members to send Michaela an email if they should have any further questions.

11. Staff Reports & Comments

A. Legal Report

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

B. Boarding Report

Tony Kalmbach, Planning & Service Development Manager, presented the Boardings Report for November 2015. He stated that ridership continues to trend low for fixed route services at 3.1% down from November 2014. Dial-A-Ride is up 4.5%, and taxi services still trend upwards as well at a 3.8% increase. For October Vanpool statistics, ridership is down 6.9%. The total operational boardings for October are down 8.9%, which continues to follow the same trends that have been seen for most of the year.

C. Treasurer's/Budget/Sales Tax Reports

Kevin Hebdon, Interim Administrative Services Manager, stated the December 2015 cash balance is at \$25 million, of which the Board has restricted \$8.6 million for three months' operating expenses and \$908,000 for approved capital expenses, leaving \$15.5 million in surplus funds. Expenditures through November are trending just under budget at \$28.7 million versus the budgeted amount of \$28.8 million. Revenues are trending at \$31.4 million which is over budget by \$740,000, compared to the budgeted amount of \$30.6 million. Prior to YTD information, revenues are \$3.2 million ahead as compared to this time last year and expenditures are \$577,000 under compared to November 2014.

There are no major changes in allocated cost per boarding or fare per boarding. Farebox recovery ratio is 12.6% compared to the budgeted amount of 12.8%. Sales tax revenue receipts for the month of December which corresponds to October business are at \$2.46 million, 4.9% more than what was received this time last year. YTD totals compared to December 2014 is at an 11.4% increase due to the mid-year 2015 budget revision, and figures are still tracking at 1.6% above the monthly budgeted amount for sales tax revenue.

Similar strong trends are seen in sales tax for the PTBAs throughout the state of Washington. The combined PTBAs are averaging a 3.8% increase in sales tax revenue.

D. General Manager's Report

Gloria Boyce, Interim General Manager, gave an update on federal governmental affairs and stated that the 2016 Omnibus Appropriations and Tax Extender Package was signed by President Obama last month and provides for permanent parity between transit and parking benefit cap levels. The monthly IRS cap on pre-tax commuter benefit deductions for 2016 will increase for both drivers and public transportation commuters from \$250 and \$130, respectively, to \$255 for both modes of transportation. The bill saves commuters more on their personal taxes and employers more on their payroll taxes.

On the state level, the Legislature returned to session on January 11, 2016, scheduled to last for 60 days. Both the House and the Senate Transportation Committees intend to delve into the Governor's proposed supplemental transportation budget proposal, and the House Transportation Committee has scheduled a work session on January 14th to discuss the road usage fee report produced over the interim.

All transit operations continue to run smoothly through the winter months. It takes a wide range of staff to make that happen. There have been a couple bumps with some vehicles during the ice, but there was nothing that interrupted service.

Gloria Boyce presented an upcoming Board calendar and added that the Board advisory workshop should be listed on February 11th at 3:30 p.m. as well.

RICHARD BLOOM asked how BFT faired during the recent ice issues. Gloria Boyce replied that BFT did not have any incidents except for two minor ones, including a vehicle that bumped into a fixed-route bus in the Tri-Cities area and a Dial-A-Ride van in Umatilla that slid across a parking lot and bumped into two cars. In both cases, the operators were able to continue with the route. Vanpool reported no incidences either.

VICE CHAIR KOCH asked if there was an increase in ridership during the ice and snow. Gloria Boyce replied that the final numbers for December have not yet been compiled, but so far that does not appear to be the case. Staff will report to the Board on this next month.

12. Board Member Comments

JIM BEAVER wished those present a Happy New Year.

RICHARD BLOOM stated in jest that he was happy to announce the Powerball pool for the City of West Richland did not win. The city still has its staff.

RICK MILLER stated that there is not a lot going on during the first of the year. He mentioned that in accordance with the rotating nature of the Commission, he is the Chairman for the Franklin County Commission for the year, so this will give him more responsibilities.

STEVE BECKEN stated that Prosser has received word that they've been rewarded a project for 7th Street which will be coming up sometime in the near future. The street will be reconstructed from Mead all the way to Wine Country Road, and the project should take some time. The city will be working with transit on this as it will affect bus routes in town.

LISA STADE stated that things are going well in Benton City with the new mayor and three new councilmembers. Two of the prior councilmembers still want to be involved in city government, so both applied for a position on the planning commission. In prior years, the position was vacant for a long period of time, so to have two people that want to fill it is excellent. The position was filled by one of the former council people, and the other was encouraged to wait for another opening.

CHRIS LILLYBLADE stated that it's been a pleasure working with retirees Steve and Andrew, and they will be missed.

VICE CHAIR KOCH stated that he appreciated the update with the Comprehensive Service Plan Study. It is quite a project and still has quite a bit left to go. As Gloria last said, the Board visioning meeting is at 3:30 p.m. on the day of the next Board meeting.

13. Next Meeting – Thursday, February 11, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. 1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland WA

14. Executive Session

No Executive Session held.

15. Adjournment

At 8:00 p.m., VICE CHAIR KOCH announced a 15 minute recess to decide the art contest winners.

Reconvened at 8:10 p.m. David Parra announced the results of the Board member votes: #7 in 3rd place with 3 votes, #9 in 2nd place with 4 votes, and #13 in 1st place with 6 votes. He stated that he will be contacting the winners throughout this month and inviting them to the next Board meeting in February in order to receive their prizes. The Board thanked David Parra for his work on the contest.

VICE CHAIR KOCH adjourned the reconvened Board meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Meeting recorded by:
Angela Sorensen, ADA Eligibility Coordinator
January 14, 2016