

**BEN FRANKLIN TRANSIT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
Monday, November 26, 2018 at 5:00 p.m.
1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland WA**

1. Meeting called to order at 5:04 p.m.
2. ROLL CALL: MATT WATKINS (Chairman), BOB KOCH (Vice-Chairman), STEVE BECKEN, LISA STADE, RICK MILLER, JOHN TRUMBO and NORMA NELSON (Non-voting Union Representative)

RICHARD BLOOM, BOB THOMPSON and SHON SMALL excused

Staff: Gloria Boyce, Keith Hall, Ken Hamm, Bill Barlow, Matthew Branson, Ali Madison, Gladys Diaz

3. Proposed Service Restoration

CHAIRMAN WATKINS turned the floor over to Keith Hall, Director of Planning and Service Development for a presentation on all available options for service restoration.

Mr. Hall provided a financial overview of contracted services lost. This included ridership and cost by service type; cost of BFT-operated services and potential solutions: expanding services and new service concepts. Slides presented provided an overview of potential replacement options in Finley which included Fixed-Route, Flex Route, or General Demand DAR options for where fixed-route expansion is not feasible. In other areas a General Demand Dial-A-Ride option was discussed. Additionally, some concentrated groups may be captured in Vanpool and Other Options. Regarding Sunday Services, staff recommend a user-led solution including Community Van, Vanpool and a program in development proposed for Board adoption in December 2019: Van-Me-Down. Mr. Hall continued with Night service options which include Full and Limited Fixed Route Options as well as a Flex Route Option. Staff continue to explore alternative transportation options as potential solutions moving forward.

Mr. Hall continued detailing each potential solution as follows:

1. Taxi Feeder Replacement: Finley

Option 1 (A): General Demand Dial-A-Ride (DAR)

- Target January 2, 2019
- Taxi Feeder cost: \$148,000 annually
- Six days per week, operated by BFT
- Dedicated vehicle
- Comparable to existing type and level of service
- Replacement cost: \$499,000 annually
- Net change in annual cost: \$351,000

Option 1 (B): Flex Route + Sat. General Demand

- Target March 11, 2019
- Taxi Feeder cost: \$148,000 annually
- Weekdays: 6am-7pm Flex Route + General Demand beyond flex stops
- Saturday: 9am-6pm General Demand
- Implementation subject to discussion with labor partners
- Replacement cost: \$1,650 daily / \$509,000 annually
- Net change in annual cost: \$361,000

Option 1 (C): Fixed Route + Sat. General Demand

- Target March 11, 2019
- Taxi Feeder cost: \$148,000 annually
- Weekdays: 6am-7pm Fixed Route service + General Demand to off-route stops
- Saturday: 9am-6pm General Demand
- Replacement cost: \$1,620 daily / \$500,000 annually
- Net change in annual cost: \$264,000

Staff Recommendation: Finley Service Area Taxi Feeder Replacement

OPTION 1(A): General Demand Dial-A-Ride (DAR)

- Interim Option: Target January 2, 2019
- Replacement cost: \$499,000 annually
- Net change in annual cost: \$351,000

OPTION 1(B): Flex Route + Sat. General Demand

- Demonstration Service: Target March 11, 2019
- Replacement cost: \$509,000 annually
- Net change in annual cost: \$361,000

2. Taxi Feeder Replacement: Other Areas

Option 2 (A): General Demand

- Target February 4, 2019
- Taxi Feeder cost: \$164,000 annually
- General Demand
- Pasco, Kennewick, Richland, West Richland
- Replacement cost: \$820 daily / \$250,000 annually
- Savings from trips shifted to ARC: \$236,500 annually
- Net change in annual cost: No fiscal impact

Option 2 (B): Vanpool (Pasco Area)

- Available immediately with employer/rider coordination
- Operates in addition to General Demand
- Clustered trips to major employers (e.g. Pasco Processing)
- Expanded outreach, implementation coordinated with employers
- Future Options:
 - King City/Pasco Processing Commuter Route (identified in TDP)
 - First/Last Mile Demo Service

Staff Recommendation: Other Areas Taxi Feeder Replacement

OPTION 2(A): General Demand

- Target February 4, 2019
- No net change in annual O&M cost

OPTION 2(B): Vanpool (Pasco Area)

- Available immediately with employer/rider coordination
- Operates in addition to General Demand
- No net change in annual O&M cost

3. Sunday Service Replacement

OPTION 3(A): Van-Me-Down (target: church trips)

OPTION 3(B): Vanpool (target: work trips)

OPTION 3(C): Community Van (target: group trips)

- Replacement cost: \$0 daily / \$0 annually
- Net annual savings: \$338,000

Future Mobility Options

- First/Last Mile Demonstration Service
- Fixed Route & DAR service on Sundays

Staff Recommendation: Sunday Service

OPTIONS 3(A), 3(B), and 3(C): User-Led Mobility

- Ongoing implementation
- Net annual savings: \$338,000
- Evaluate Future Mobility Options to provide Sunday Service

4. Night Services Replacement

OPTION 4(A): Extend hours systemwide

- Phased implementation in 2019
- Taxi cost: \$579,400 annually
- Fixed Route network:
 - Extends fixed-route system by two hours daily
 - Replacement cost: \$9,700 daily / \$2,970,000 annually
- DAR:
 - Extends DAR system by two hours daily
 - Replacement cost: \$1,500 daily / \$470,000 annually
- Total replacement cost: \$3,440,000 annually
- Net change in annual cost: \$2,860,600
- ***Opportunities***
 - Service extended to 10pm (9pm on Saturdays)
 - Captures end of retail shifts for employment and shopping trips
- ***Challenges***
 - Substantial operational budget increase
 - Significant reduction in service productivity is likely

- Implementation throughout 2019 due to labor availability (longest implementation period among “short-term” options)
- Labor requirements (available drivers and training time)

OPTION 4(B): Extend hours on reduced Fixed Route network + DAR

- Target March 11, 2019
- Taxi cost: \$579,400 annually
- Fixed Route network:
 - Extends reduced network of fixed routes by two hours daily
 - Replacement cost: \$5,350 daily / \$1,642,500 annually
- DAR:
 - Extends DAR system by two hours daily
 - Replacement Cost: \$1,500 daily / \$470,000 annually
- Net change in annual cost: \$1,533,100
- ***Opportunities***
 - Captures end of retail shifts for employment and shopping trips
 - Minimizes service footprint while providing service along higher ridership corridors served by retail (later hours)
- ***Challenges***
 - Continued disruption of night service during Q1 2019

OPTION 4(C): Night Flex Route (transit hub connections)

- Target March 11, 2019
- Taxi Feeder cost: \$579,400 annually
- Flex Route:
 - Limited coverage Flex Route for two hours after end of fixed-route service
 - Replacement cost: \$3,000 daily / \$940,000 annually
- DAR:
 - Implementation subject to discussion with labor partners
 - Replacement cost: \$1,500 daily / \$470,000 annually
- Net change in annual cost: \$830,600
- ***Opportunities***
 - Captures end of retail shifts for employment and shopping trips
 - Minimizes service footprint while providing service along higher ridership corridors served by retail
- ***Challenges***
 - Drop offs limited to designated route zone or stops
 - Implementation subject to discussion with labor partners

Staff Recommendation: Night Service

Option 4 (B): Extend Hours on Reduced Fixed-Route Network + DAR

- Demonstration Night Service: Target March 11, 2019
- Replacement cost: \$2,112,500 annually
- Net change in annual cost: \$1,533,100

- Evaluate future mobility options to supplement Night Service routes and hours

Future Options:

- 2019 Planning Program
 - Fare policy review
 - Evaluate fare media and cost, including transfers and vouchers
 - Demonstration services and future mobility options
 - Ride hailing services (taxi and transit network companies) for first/last mile connections
 - Demonstration routes (evaluate service)
 - Subscription service
 - Focus on multimodal connections to the fixed-route network
 - Bus stop and access infrastructure
 - Evaluate stops, locations, amenities, and spacing, including future mobility connections
 - Strategic planning
 - Identify options through long-range plan

Mr. Hall invited Ali Madison, Director of Marketing & Communications to present the Communications Plan:

1. Community Wide Status Update
 - a. TIMING: Immediately following Special Board Meeting*
 - b. Press Release detailing meeting actions, path forward
 - c. Digital (website, social media)
2. Targeted Stakeholder Communications
 - a. TIMING: 2-4 weeks ahead of new service implementation
 - b. Press Release announcing solution, implementation details
 - c. Digital (website, social media incl. targeted ads, exploring digital geofencing)
 - d. Direct mail with customized messaging by stakeholder audience
Finley residents, schools, social service agencies, disabled community representatives, ARC and related orgs, employers
 - e. Systemwide print collateral (transit center + onboard signage, flyers)
3. Broader Community Outreach
 - a. TIMING: 2 weeks ahead of new service implementation + ongoing
 - b. Broader campaign tie-in (We're Going New Places)
 - c. Digital (website, social media incl. ad boosts, targeted ad placements)
 - d. Print advertising
 - e. Proactive pitching for earned follow-up media stories, op-ed

**Plans and/or timelines may need to morph based on meeting outcome(s), other factors*

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated concerns in ensuring financial sustainability in any solutions decided upon this evening. Mr. Hall informed the Board that the financial slides were not

included in the Board's presentation sent in advance, however the financial model is available for this evening's review.

Mr. Hall continued by recapping the staff's recommendations being proposed to the Board for their consideration as follows:

Finley Service Area

OPTION 1(A): General Demand Dial-A-Ride (DAR)

- Interim Option: Target January 2, 2019 (net change \$351,000)

OPTION 1(B): Flex Route + Sat. General Demand

- Demonstration Service: Target March 11, 2019 (net change \$361,000)

Other Areas

OPTION 2(A): General Demand

- Target February 4, 2019 (no net change in O&M cost)

OPTION 2(B): Vanpool (Pasco Area)

- Available immediately (no net change in annual O&M cost)

Sunday Service

OPTIONS 3(A), 3(B), and 3(C): User-Led Mobility

- Evaluate future mobility options (set savings \$338,000)

Night Service

OPTION 4(B): Extend Hours on Reduced Fixed-Route Network + DAR

- Demonstration Night Service: Target March 11, 2019 (net change \$1,533,100)
- Evaluate future mobility options to supplement Night Service routes and hours

Mr. Hall concluded by reviewing the financial model of the staff recommended solutions, along with a presentation of the financial sustainability model. He then opened for questions or comments.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS clarified varied financial point with staff. Specifically, with a \$42 million operating budget, staff's recommendation will increase it by approximately \$1.6m. Matthew Branson, Interim Director of Administrative Services agreed. Gloria Boyce clarified the sales tax increase modeling, increase and potential fluctuations would be accommodated by operating reserves. After conducting a long-term analysis, we feel the sustainability model is conservative and supports this evenings recommendation.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS confirmed that the model shown includes staff's recommendations. Staff confirmed, yes.

Gloria Boyce, General Manager provided further clarification on Night Services and the limited impact on the current system and proposed services offered will have. Additionally, she informed the Board that Finley service was addressed first, and request the Board provide guidance on how they would like to proceed. Other services will have significant behind-the-scenes takes that will need to be addressed prior to implementation, which in turn, extends the earliest implementation dates provided.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS opened the floor for Board comments. Additional time will be offered for public comment following Board comments.

BOB KOCH stated his support for the Staff recommendations and clarified that the staffing and training requirements will likely be the largest hurdle. Ms. Boyce stated that conversations have started to keep partners of the union informed and thus far, it has been positive.

JOHN TRUMBO stated that he appreciated the comment from CHAIRMAN WATKINS regarding the need for full information. He stated he prefers to have the full information in order to make an educated decision. He inquired if the staff recommendations will make the service whole prior to Tri City Taxi, and would these solutions provide more or less services. Additional discussion regarding budgeted amounts, issues with TCT, historical reasons for TCT closure, TCT service levels, and contract changes were held.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated this is a dynamic environment and confirmed with Gloria Boyce that the letter addressed does not address all facets of the issue at hand.

Gloria Boyce, General Manager stated that staff was in negotiations with TCT up until the date which they informed BFT they would be closing their doors. Discussion was held.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated to those in attendance that only one person speaks at a time.

Paul Singer, of Kennewick expressed concerns that night service is the last service being addressed in the service solutions.

Casey Casler stated that as a wheelchair rider, the trips were so expensive with TCT outside of the service hours that if services were expanded, the wheelchair community will ride significantly more.

No Name provided, inquired why night service was reduced from 6:30 p.m. – 2:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. to midnight. Additional comments were made on limiting workable hours due to no services being provided. Ms. Boyce stated that due to the low number of rides in that time frame, that decision was made during the service change.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS reiterated that the topic at hand is the services to be implemented moving forward.

Kevin Lakey, shared support of staff's recommendations and BFT operating these services but expressed concern on reservation processes previously used (calling in day of at 5pm) as well as service caps.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS deferred to Gloria Boyce. Ms. Boyce stated the reservation process would be 1-7 days before.

Jody Peachan, ARC volunteer, expressed concerns on ARC activities. Staff reiterated that the Board of Directors agreed to extend the ARC night service be extended to the end of their event times.

Christina Tag, Tri City Residential Services, expressed concern for wheelchair community. Additionally, are the ARC extended rides only for ARC events? Staff confirmed yes, only previously scheduled events. Ms. Boyce stated that if service is extended, those eligible will be provided DAR services during the extension period. Christina asked what about the rides after 10pm? Gloria Boyce stated that is a gap still.

Teresa Hollenbach, community member, stated that their faith-organizations and groups like Celebrate Recovery have ran into an issue with hours of service as they do not fit into the timeframes being offered.

Tina Collins thanked those for who shared and stated that riders feel more comfortable with DAR drivers. Living in Finley, there still seems to be a gap. ADA-eligible services were discussed. Services are not available for medical appointments. Thank you for potentially extending services to 10 p.m.

Dan Thomas, only option is Dial-A-Ride and Sunday service is completely gone.

Justin Crume, Columbia Industries, shared concerns on the contract structure and \$40/per trip fee collected by TCT. Following the TCT termination, Columbia Industries reached out to BFT, to offer assistance, however no call back was provided. Many people work Sundays, why no options presented. Paul Singer stated that Columbia Industries is one of the original partners.

Tammy LaDue inquired if the RFP was public. Staff confirmed that this was competitively-bid per Federal regulations. Ms. Ladue asked if TCT was the only respondent, staff confirmed, yes. Ms. LaDue asked if BFT could run a second RFP to potentially match prior service levels.

Gloria Boyce, General Manager stated that the Board request was to restore services as quickly as able.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated that taking this route, the services would still see an increase.

Gloria Boyce reiterated all potential vendors contacted and no solution was defined. BFT has the fleet and the resources but will require time to implement. Sunday Services

Lisa Stade requested clarification as to what exactly a Flex-Route + Saturday General Demand would look like. Staff reviewed. Additional comments were made regarding Union contracts and negotiations required. Discussion was held.

Christina Winters, expressed priority of a vote tonight and requested the Board take compassion on those who are required to walk to stops in inclement weather, lack of amenities and those with non-visible disabilities. Additional statements regarding needs for Sunday Services.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS reiterated that the service in Finley will always look different from the main system due to it not sitting in the Urban-core.

Joshua Calderon expressed concern over areas of service.

Joanie of Richland inquired if TransPlus is running and whether or not weekends will be served. Staff responded. CHAIRMAN WATKINS clarified potential Sunday services in the future.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated that the need to share accurate information is critically important. Staff will engage multiple avenues to continue their communications plan.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS inquired of the full Board if the staff's recommendation is agreeable and opened the floor for discussion. Pat Roach, Legal Counsel, stated that upon consensus, a motion could be made.

LISA STADE clarified the Sunday Service solutions offered. Ms. Boyce reviewed the program being proposed along with the extent of the impacted population. Further outreach will be made once Board decision is made.

JOHN TRUMBO made a motion to create a plan based off Staff's recommendation to include Finley Option 1A, Other Areas 2A, Sunday Services 3A and Night Service Option 4B on a temporary basis with an added provision that BFT craft an RFP for Taxi service to take effect as soon as possible as is practicable and options as identified earlier in this motion expire as soon as service begins.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS called upon Pat Roach, to confirm the appropriateness of the action.

Pat Roach, Legal counsel clarified the motion, The Board to approve a plan proposed by staff to include options 1A, 2A, 3A, and 4B on a temporary basis and that staff prepared an RFP for Taxi services which were lost.

Motion seconded by RICK MILLER. CHAIRMAN WATKINS inquired of Gloria Boyce if this motion is feasible. MS. Boyce stated that Finely services on a temporary basis is feasible, however gearing up for Fixed route expansion is a tremendous undertaking. CHAIRMAN WATKINS asked if there were any aspects of the motion that could be changed for feasibility. Discussion held on RFP process, previous respondents and descriptions of contract value for potential respondents. Ms. Boyce clarified that Fixed Route full extension covers the entire Tri City population, whereas the ancillary services

JOHN TRUMBO reviewed the financial implications of all Night Service options. Discussion was held. Keith Hall stated that it is important to keep in mind that the served population is only representative of approximately one-third of the demand as rides have historically been denied due to lack of capacity and caps.

Gloria Boyce proposed to the Board that they consider the future options and not only an RFP for previous service types, which are not in line with national Public transportation programs, specifically "First and Last Mile" programs. This will allow BFT to grow its ridership while providing services to the entire Tri City PTBA as a whole. Discussion was held.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS recapped Ms. Boyce's comments. He stated that remaining open to creative future options is critical and expressed that he will be voting against the motion on the floor and will want staff and Board thoughts reflected in decision being made.

Discussion was held.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS recapped the motion and opened the floor for discussion. He then called for a roll call vote.

Stade- Yea (for like services)
Becken – Yea, with reservation
Trumbo- Yea
Miller- Yea
Watkins- No
Koch- Yea

Motion Carried.

Gloria Boyce requested clarification on LISA STADE’s vote “for like services.” CHAIRMAN WATKINS clarified that the motion did not include that. Ms. Boyce stated that implementation efforts could be started on immediately. An RFP could be provided to the Board after the new year. CHAIRMAN WATKINS requested timeline, update and implementation schedule in the December meeting.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS thanked those in attendance for attendance and comments. He then opened the floor to any other items needing attention.

Pat Roach stated no Executive session is needed.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Meeting recorded by:
Gladys Diaz, Interim Clerk of the Board
November 26, 2018