BEN FRANKLIN TRANSIT BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 14, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. 1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland WA

- 1. CHAIRMAN WATKINS called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- 2. Roll Call: MATT WATKINS (Chairman), BOB KOCH (Vice-Chairman), RICHARD BLOOM, JOHN TRUMBO, LISA STADE, STEVE BECKEN, CLINT DIDIER and NORMA NELSON (Non-Voting Union Representative)

SHON SMALL excused BOB THOMPSON absent

Staff:

Gloria Boyce, Pat Roach – Legal Counsel, Jeremy Bishop – Legal Counsel, Jerry Otto, Keith Hall, Matthew Branson, Kelsey Schalock, Ali Madison, Ken Hamm and Catherine Getic

3. Pledge of Allegiance

CHAIRMAN WATKINS lead all in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Citizen's Public Comment/Introduction of Visitors

CHAIRMAN WATKINS called for public comment on any item not further down on the agenda.

Jim DeFries, former BFT Coach operator read the letter submitted for his resignation (Attached). Following the reading of the resignation letter he stated that he is speaking not on behalf of a disgruntled employee but rather as a taxpayer. Mr. DeFries stated that he had been in the office for reasons relating to working conditions eight times in less than five months. It was believed that following these meetings conditions would change but stated that rather they got worse. Mr. DeFries continued stating that drivers are exposed to all forms of people every day, people in "dog fights" and "pit bull fights" providing an example that recently another driver had a rider try to light a gas can on fire while on the bus in Pasco. He would then be instructed to complete an incident report but that nothing ever happens resulting from that incident. The employees were then put through Covey training and stated that that procedure was not being followed either. Mr. DeFries then continued regarding that the extended hours is not going to be cost effective running until 10:00PM with the limited ridership but that he is very concerned that later in the evening someone is going to be hurt and that it is most likely going to be a driver. Other concerns were voiced by Mr. DeFries that BFT previously used route books with expectations that animal be kenneled, that riders couldn't eat on the bus but now the response is to call customer service or go to the website, he continued, making a generalization, that many Pasco riders do not have access to internet and that many riders would have to go to the library to access the website. CHAIRMAN

WATKINS requested Mr. DeFries finalize his comments due to time. Mr. DeFries finished that he was concerned over the late-night drivers' safety. CHAIRMAN WATKINS thanked Mr. DeFries for his perspective and verified BFT has a copy of the Resignation letter.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS opened the floor for any other comments or introductions to which there were none.

5. Approval of Agenda

CHAIRMAN WATKINS noted that the agenda had an adjustment and the corrected version provided to the Board of Directors.

ACTION: RICHARD BLOOM made, and JOHN TRUMBO seconded a motion to approve the agenda as provided. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

6. Recognitions

A. 2017 CAFR GFOA Award - Staff Recognition

Matthew Branson, Interim Director of Administrative Services explained the acronym CAFR, Consolidated Annual Financial Report and the GFOA, Governmental Financial Officers Association. BFT received notice in January 2019 acknowledgment that BFT had received the CAFR award for the 2017-Year End Financial Statement. We present this in recognition of the work of the agency and the staff. We recognize that part of the effort that goes to this with the invoice review and accountability for how money is spent but also the work that goes into preparing for an audit. BFT is audited by the Washington State Auditors Office in June each year, we submit our financial statements to the GFOA for submittal for the award. This is the sixth year in row that BFT has received this award. Mr. Branson continued to express his gratitude to the Finance Department Staff. A plaque is in the BFT MOA lobby with the coins for each year this award has been received.

B. 2018 Art Contest Award Presentation

Ali Madison, Director of Marketing stated that we have finalized the 2018 BFT Art Contest. BFT received 300 entries from 16 schools. Second and third place winners will receive gift cards for art supplies for themselves along with their teachers and, in addition, the first-place winner will receive a bicycle. All three winners will also receive their framed artwork this evening.

3rd Place: Larissa McLeod, Southridge High School - \$100 Gift Card for Art Supplies and a Summer Youth Pass

Teacher: Corrine Lechelt - \$250 Gift Card for Art Supplies

2nd Place: Regina (Reggie) Rannow, Southridge High School - \$100 Gift Card for Art Supplies and a Summer Youth Pass

Teacher: Corrine Lechelt - \$250 Gift Card for Art Supplies

1st Place: Leslie Mendez-Marin, Kennewick High School - \$100 Gift Card for Art Supplies and a Summer Youth Pass and a bicycle

Teacher: Suzy Ard - \$500 Gift Card for Art Supplies

CHAIRMAN WATKINS asked the winners, their teachers and the Board of Directors to stand and take a group photo. Ms. Madison noted that these entries will also be displayed large scale on the Art Bus, which will be brought to the winner's school prior to much ridership. In addition, the top 50 entries will be displayed at all the local libraries throughout spring break.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS thanked the artists and the art program teachers for the work put into these programs.

7. <u>Citizen's Advisory Network</u> – None

8. Board Committee Reports

CHAIRMAN WATKINS invited the committee chairs to report on their respective committee meetings.

A. Operations & Maintenance Committee, SHON SMALL

SHON SMALL, absent from Board of Directors meeting. Minutes from the Committee meeting were provided in the Board packet.

B. Planning & Marketing Committee, RICHARD BLOOM, Chair

DIRECTOR BLOOM stated that the Committee discussed the demonstration services placed over the summer, additional notes are in the meeting minutes. The "River Runner" did not perform very well and it was suggested that route 110 be redirected to cover the Reach Museum. Additionally, surveys for the 63D and 68D were conducted. DIRECTOR BLOOM continued that the Committee discussed the Van-Me-Down program and some constraints applied to that program such as federal and state requirements, the marketing work conducted for the service extension and expansion and that the upcoming procurement schedule was reviewed. DIRECTOR BLOOM concluded his review that he had suggested attendance on March 14, 2019 to the Washington State Department of Transportation Highway 240 Open House at which he saw DIRECTOR DIDIER.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS called for any questions to which there were none.

C. Administration & Finance Committee, STEVE BECKEN, Chair

DIRECTOR BECKEN stated that the Committee discussed the proposed cash vault services contract with Garda, the CAFR award already presented and the Status of New Service to be presented later in the agenda.

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

- A. Approval of February 21, 2019 Regular Board Meeting Minutes
- B. February Voucher Summary

February 2019 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 has been emailed to the Board members March 8, 2019.

Pavroll

Check Register Number	Check Number/ Nur	Check Number/ Number		In the Amount	
502-19	80181	80200	02/01/2019	\$467,227.72	Payroll
503-19	80201	80218	02/15/2019	\$455,049.57	Payroll

Total \$922,277.29

Non-Payroll Vouchers

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Check Register Number	Check Number/ Number		Date of Issue	In the Amount					
108-19	70493	70499	02/01/2019	\$17,777.98	MDSE				
109-19	70500	70537	02/08/2019	\$147,400.86	MDSE				
110-19	ACH TRANS		02/15/2019	\$844,239.92	ACH TRANS				
111-19	70538	70612	02/15/2019	\$298,849.78	MDSE				
112-19	ACH TRANS		02/22/2019	\$159,910.35	ACH TRANS				
113-19	70613	70669	02/22/2019	\$347,894.06	MDSE				
114-19	ACH TRANS	_	02/28/2019	\$24,868.76	ACH TRANS				
115-19	70670	70728	02/28/2019	\$125,632.44	MDSE				

Total: \$1,966,574.15

Check register numbers 502-19 to 503-19 and 108-19 to 115-19;

In the total amount of: \$2,888,851.44

- C. Resolution 18 2019 Authorizing the General Manager to declare vehicles identified in Exhibit "A" as surplus and dispose per Resolution 59-2018
- D. Resolution 19 2019 Authorizing the General Manager to transfer two vehicles to Link Transit Authority
- E. Resolution 20 2019 Recommending Garda CL Northwest, Inc. to be Awarded the Cash Vault Services Contract

CHAIRMAN WATKINS read aloud the items on the Consent Agenda and made note that typing corrections were necessary for the February 21, 2019 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes. The floor was opened for comments and questions. CHAIRMAN WATKINS called for a motion on the Consent Agenda as presented.

ACTION: BOB KOCH made, STEVE BECKEN seconded a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented and minutes as corrected. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

10. Action Items - NONE

11. <u>Discussion & Informational Items</u>

A. Status of New Service

Keith Hall, Director of Planning & Service Development stated that everything is operating at this time as expected. On March 13, 2019 showed 175 night service boardings on fixed route and 99 night service Dial-A-Ride with 500 additional boardings overall for the month compared to this time in 2018. The Van-Me-Down program is complete, four vans have gone out and two more are ready to go, the remainder will go out in the next few weeks. The request for proposal is out for contracted services, deadline was extended, and an additional pre-proposal meeting conducted due to the inclement weather experienced in the month of February. A total of 6 parties have shown interest. Mr. Hall continued that the marketing efforts have completed and on opening night employees went out to the locations to assist and get feedback.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS noted that this is mostly related to the loss of the taxi services and that many changes were more easily made this has been the long process to fill the night service. Mr. Hall explained that yes, this was the longer part of the overall project and that it will show more results over time as riders become more aware and familiar with the new service.

RICHARD BLOOM asked to clarify that the nightly extended hours are functioning at about 50% of what the old taxi service was completing. Mr. Hall replied that this is correct before the cap but also added that the cost for the fixed route is less that \$8.00 round trip whereas the taxi service would be around \$20.00 and with this changed are expected to be seen. RICHARD BLOOM continued, clarifying that this also covers the Finley service routes. Mr. Hall confirmed yes.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS confirmed that additional updates on ridership will be provided in the future, Mr. Hall confirmed that there will be updates on ridership numbers in the future however based on the board cycle numbers may not yet be available to present at the April Board Meeting.

B. Gallup Q12

Gloria Boyce, General Manager stated that following the Board Meeting in February that the choice was made to provide the Gallup Q12 report this evening. Ms. Boyce introduced the Gallup consultant, Liza Romero, who will be presenting the report.

Liza Romero, Gallup Consultant to BFT stated that the report/review today would cover the overall results of the Gallup Q12 Employee Engagement Survey. Through this process, the employees at BFT have been given an opportunity to share their opinions, thoughts, concerns and comments on what matters to them the most about working here at BFT.

Within the Gallup Q12 you will see a measurement of employee engagement. Gallup outlines engagement into 3 categories: Engaged, Not Engaged, and Actively Disengaged. According to Gallup, 85% of employees worldwide are not engaged or actively disengaged in their jobs in

addition Gallup identifies that work groups with high levels of engagement had 41% less absenteeism, 70% fewer safety incidents, 59% less turnover, and 17% higher productivity.

Ms. Romero provided an overview of Gallup stating that Gallup has conducted assessments in more than 60 countries and in more than 30 languages. Combined over 80 years of experience, clients in over 2,000 organizations and over 20 different industries. Following decades of research, Gallup identified 12 common elements for employee needs and elements that exist in high-performing work environments thus creating the Gallup Q12 Survey.

Through feedback from BFT employees the online survey question response anonymity was a concern and a change in collection is being reviewed to provide a more secure sense of anonymity.

The 12 elements of Engagement can be broken down into four basic stages: Basic Needs, Individual, Teamwork, and Growth.

BFT's results this year were measured against the Public Industry Administrative/Government Agencies benchmark as this is the first engagement survey of this extent there is no initial comparison to past results.

BFT results: 3.24 Grandmean from a possible 5-point scale. The Grandmean measures overall workgroup engagement, the closer to the 5 points the more engaged the workplace is considered to be. 135 surveys were completed providing a 43% employee response and ranked in the 19th percentile in the Public Industry, the higher the percentile, the stronger the item is in relation to the Gallup database. BFT's engagement index (the three levels of engagement) are as follows: 20% Engaged, 44% Not Engaged, and 36% Actively Disengaged. Engaged to Actively Disengaged employee ratio is one to one.

A description of the scores by department were presented highlighting the department lowest and highest scores. Company overall questions that boasted the lowest score mean were question four on recognition, question eleven on progress in the last six months, question ten on having a best friend at work, and question seven on opinions mattering in the workplace.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS requested that we pause and answer some questions on information presented up to this point.

JOHN TRUMBO asked about the percentage presented of 85% of employees not engaged or actively disengaged. He was requesting to clarify whether this percentage is an account of all employee environment/industry or if this is based on a specific group of industry, if this percentage varies depending on what overall industry groups we would look at. Ms. Romero to look into whether Gallup can provide a breakdown of the engagement percentage based on industry.

LISA STADE asked about the scores listed provided by department on how the scale was identified. Ms. Romero responded that that group of data was highlighted light yellow for the bottom numbers by group.

In addition to the Q12 questions three open ended questions were presented that captured five common themes: Communication, Leadership/Management, Operations, Training and Kudos.

Next Steps: BFT is in the Action Planning phase of the Gallup process. This action planning is vital for engagement and including teams to create and implement those actions. Gallup has identified a strong statistical correlation between the degree to which team members feel that they have created and implemented a plan to improve the workplace and their overall engagement. Workgroups that show the greatest year over year gains share three common items: They share and discuss their engagement results with one another, they create performance goals and a plan to increase engagement, and they work together throughout the year to make progress on their engagement and performance goals.

Timeline: Each team is to conduct a state of the team meeting by March 17th, turn in completed action plans by April 1st and regularly track progress. Follow ups are planned to be conducted quarterly, and monthly to keep employees engaged and informed along the way.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS asked Ms. Romero's impression on Ben Franklin Transits first experience with the survey. Ms. Romero responded that in comparison to other companies she has consulted with before transit is similar. There is some hesitation on what the process looks like, the communication is important as to the purpose and why an employee/company is completing the survey, the participants comfortability. For BFT's first time through it was a great foundation based on her experience, and it left some items to follow up on and actionable items. There was great participation not just through the Q12 but in the written feedback also. CHAIRMAN WATKINS asked if there were any details that stood out to be unusual or different? Ms. Romero stated that there were not items that were unusual but more similar to other survey results. Communication was the largest noted item for improvement.

RICHARD BLOOM asked why question eight was not selected for a focus area rather than question ten. Question eight appears to be a more valuable change that will lead to positive results to question ten. It appears to be more relative to the employee feedback. In addition, RICHARD BLOOM asked how the narrative responses will be evaluated? Ms. Romero stated that the common themes are directly pulled from the narrative responses. Stating that these items were pulled by her directly. From the State of the Agency meetings, voiced comments were gathered from those that have added actionable items. RICHARD BLOOM asked if the narrative responses will be brought to the review meetings. Ms. Romero stated that they will not in order to protect privacy as notes can identify employees if used in an open discussion. CHAIRMAN WATKINS reiterated the question of why question ten was selected over question eight. Ms. Romero stated that these were pulled solely based on numeric results and were pulled to help start conversation in the State of the Agency meetings and that departments have other questions that are identified specifically to that department for focus. Ms. Romero stated an opinion that the feedback sessions and the open comments are more valuable in some regards.

JOHN TRUMBO asked for clarification about the 19th percentile whether a higher number is a better value. Ms. Romero clarified that this number being higher is better out of 70.

LISA STADE confirmed the values and asked about the State of the Agency meetings. Ms. Romero explained that these meetings were held in January, BFT held eight or nine meetings at various times and the Leadership team was involved with each one of these meetings. Presentation to the staff was provided similar to what was discussed tonight, discussions were had with each meeting and notes from those discussions were taken to then assist with the next step, meeting with each division/department to outline more specifics.

LISA STADE also asked about the Action plan step of teams collecting thoughts and ideas about each of the Q12 items from team members and how that process works. Ms. Romero responded that this is specifically the State of the Team meetings to be held that narrows the group discussions to divisions/departments.

NORMA NELSON asked is BFT will be completing another survey and if the questions will change. Ms. Romero confirmed that BFT is to complete two more surveys and that the questions will not change. The reason the questions do not change is to track responses and progress made in the areas surrounding those questions.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS asked Ms. Boyce her thoughts on the Gallup Q12 Survey. Ms. Boyce responded that great attention went into making sure that employees understood the survey and to work together in creating an engaging workforce. Meetings were conducted by like groups to open communication and allow for narrowing of the organizational score to focus down on workforce items down by department. We are trying to capture what items are working well and what items are not working well by department and a few company overall items. All actions are coming directly from the employees to then provide department individualized action plans. We then have the expectation to re-test ourselves at the end of the year to see where growth has been made. Ms. Boyce continued that State of the Team meetings will be held in April.

LISA STADE asked how BFT plans to coordinate the State of the Team meetings for the Operators and Drivers due to the size and varying shifts and if this meeting time is paid. Ms. Romero explained that a plan is in place to facilitate smaller groups in this department. Ms. Boyce responded that paid status is being evaluated and she has not received information on the schedule to answer completely but, it will depend on when the employee attends the meeting. BFT is trying to create an environment that encourages employees to attend while providing as convenient a process/time as possible. Ms. Boyce commented that with the amount of dialogue seen in the meetings to this point the time for each meeting is longer than it had been anticipated.

RICHARD BLOOM clarified the highlighting on the presentation of the scores by department.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated that there will be some follow up provided over the next several months and another round of surveys being conducted again later this year and asked what method will be used to encourage higher participation in the next survey. Ms. Boyce responded that we will be using a department number rather than an employee number that, based on the listening sessions, should accommodate the concerns voiced about the confidentiality of the responses.

JOHN TRUMBO commented that while higher participation is desired, this does not correlate directly to higher engagement scores, that these are two separate goals. CHAIRMAN WATKINS confirmed but stated that the expectation is that with higher participation and follow through on action plans expectation is to see higher engagement scores.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS noted that one measure that does not reflect in these numbers is the willingness and earnestness of wanting to engage in a process that is honest about improving the process and improving the working climate. This seems to have the hallmark of opportunity, but the question is whether people will participate.

JOHN TRUMBO asked where the Monthly/quarterly updates go, do they come to the Board? Ms. Boyce stated that updates will be coordinated after the next round of meetings, but an update would be coming to the Board. At this time, it is not specified what interval will be expected.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS thanked Ms. Romero for the information on this large topic and Ms. Boyce as well.

12. Staff Reports & Comments

A. Legal Report

Patrick Roach stated there is not a legal report for the Board however there is a need for an executive session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i). Confirmed need with CHAIRMAN WATKINS. Executive Session is expected to last 10 minutes.

Jeremy Bishop answered an open item question from the February Board Meeting specific for JOHN TRUMBO regarding exit interview information as a non-public document. Following review Mr. Bishop has determined that these documents would fall under RCW 42.56.230(3). With a public record request the recommendation is to redact all personal identifying information.

B. Financial Report

Matthew Branson, Interim Director of Administrative Services, stated for January 2019 BFT had \$2.8 million in operating revenue, \$240,000 under prior YTD and total operating expenditures are trending under budget. Fares and Boardings are trending in line, due to the weather we are seeing the resulting ridership in the Fares and Boardings numbers. Treasurer's report included February information: deposits are secure, over \$5 million remaining in undesignated reserve funds. Sales Tax revenue increased 1.1% in Feb 2019 for Dec 2018 business as compared to Dec 2017. BFT notes a YTD increase of 6.5% as compared to the same periods in 2017. Receipts in Feb for December sales were \$3.38 million.

RICHARD BLOOM requested clarification on the Fare per Boarding report, values not including the extended hours. Mr. Branson confirmed that these numbers do not include the new service expansion. Additional financials were included in the Board packet.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS opened the floor for questions and comments to which there were none.

C. General Manager's Report

Gloria Boyce, General Manager, provided the Board with a review of this month's notable topics:

- Government Affairs Update
 - o Federal:
 - Federal 2019 appropriation amounts were released earlier this week. BFT received approx. 10% less in operating funding than last year.
 - o State:
 - As mentioned last month, Ms. Boyce attended the WSTA Legislature Conference the end of February. Senator King, Hobbs and Saldana canceled

their visits due to action in the Senate Transportation Committee however, Representative Fey, Chair of the House Transportation Committee explained his proposed green transportation bill to us. A presentation was also received from the Department of Ecology regarding the VW Federal Settlement. As with the State Settlement, BFT has been designated as a priority agency to receive funding. In the next couple of months, a presentation on BFT's alternative fuels strategies with the Board.

o Operations:

- Operations continue to return to normal with the changing weather; we made all scheduled pullouts this month.
- A big thankyou to our Maintenance staff who, once the snow melted, immediately began washing buses to ensure our cleanliness standard was maintained.
- Next Monday is Transit Driver Appreciation Day. BFT will be celebrating our drivers who focus on their route schedule, check fares, gives directions, load and unload customers and packages all while driving safely in unpredictable traffic to keep our community moving.
- Ms. Boyce reported that Matthew Branson will be moving on from BFT. He has been with BFT for 18 months and the first project he took on was the 30-year cleanup of the fixed assets which took him about six months. Additionally, Mr. Branson has been beneficial with other departments and has received his CDL. Lastly noted, he took place in the first leg of the North Dakota State University Transit training, certifying him as a transit professional.

Ms. Boyce opened for questions to which there were none.

RICHARD BLOOM asked about the federal settlement money use for the alternative fuel vehicles. Ms. Boyce responded that to use the funding BFT must retire a diesel coach bus, year 2007 or older, of which BFT has three. The funding must be used for a bus, it cannot be used for any other type of vehicle.

13. Board Member Comments

- A. JOHN TRUMBO Appreciation stated for the Q12 review and wants to know that follow through after the team meetings occur.
- B. RICHARD BLOOM Thankfully the snow is melting! Hoping that the cities will not incur any additional snow removal costs this year.
- C. CHAIRMAN MATT WATKINS Ms. Boyce and CHAIRMAN WATKINS met with Bob Tippet and representatives from the Washington Policy Advisory Center following some articles that have run in the Herald. The conversation was valuable to all parties in information and may lead to further reports. Kudos given to BFT for enduring and working with the local municipalities to facilitate and work through the recent inclement weather.
- D. BOB KOCH Reported about the TRAC center to Hapo center name change, still the same administration.
- E. STEVE BECKEN Snow melting but left the task of filling the pot holes.

- F. LISA STADE Thank you to those who organized the Art Contest, hopes a big deal is made about the bus going to each of the schools. The yearly report looks wonderful. Lastly recommend looking as a further review question Q7.
- G. CLINT DIDIER Concerned about a public comment made by Jim DeFries, what is being allowed to be brought on our busses. Concerned mostly about the needle exchange and safety for the drivers. CHAIRMAN WATKINS recommended Mr. DIDIER follow up with Ms. Boyce for some specifics.
- H. NORMA NELSON Negotiations start next month, several meetings with each group have been held. Several grievances pending, varying stages. Agreed to hold off all Step 2's until Wendi Warner returns. Working with Ken Hamm on the scheduling due to the extended services that can cause abnormally long days or reduced time off between shifts. All new drivers are out of training. Ms. NELSON personally acknowledged Neal for his years as a trainer.

14. Next Meeting:

Regular Board Meeting – Thursday, April 11, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. BFT MOA Board Room, 1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland WA

15. Executive Session

Regular Meeting went into recess at 8:53 p.m. until 9:03 p.m.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated Executive Session would last ten minutes, until approximately 9:03 p.m. No Action anticipated.

At 9:03 p.m. CHAIRMAN WATKINS called those still present in and reconvened the meeting. No action was taken.

16. Adjournment

CHAIRMAN WATKINS adjourned the BFT Board of Directors meeting at 9:03 p.m.

Meeting recorded by: Catherine Getic, Interim Clerk of the Board March 14, 2019