



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, July 18, 2024, at 6 p.m.

Benton County Administration Building, Room 303  
7122 W. Okanogan Place Building E, Kennewick, Washington

*Meeting attendance options included in-person and virtual via Zoom*

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### MINUTES

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#### 1. CONVENE BOARD MEETING

Chair Will McKay called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Clerk of the Board Anel Montejano asked the Board of Directors to state their name when their jurisdiction was called.

#### 2. ROLL CALL

Representing	Attendee Name	Title	Status
City of Pasco	Charles Grimm	Director	Present
City of Kennewick	Brad Beauchamp	Vice Chair	Present
City of Richland	Kurt Maier	Director	Present
City of West Richland	Richard Bloom	Director	Present
Franklin County #2	Stephen Bauman	Director	Present
Franklin County #1	Clint Didier	Director	Present via Zoom
Benton County	Will McKay	Chair	Present
City of Prosser	Steve Becken	Director	Present
City of Benton City	David Sandretto	Director	Present via Zoom
Teamsters Union 839	Caleb Suttle	Union Representative	Present

**BFT Staff:** Andrea Benson, Janet Brett, Imelda Collop, Terry DeJuan, Tony Kalmbach, Christopher Lilyblade, Brian Lubanski, Gabe Martin, Mackenzie Miller, Shawna Munyan, Rob Orvis, Emily Pearce, Aimee Ramirez, Joshua Rosas, Kevin Sliger, Anish Tamrakar, Penny Thoelke, Solomon Torelli, Kathryn Wall, Vanessa Walsh, Wayne Welle

**Legal Counsel:** Jeremy Bishop

**Interpreters:** Ruth Medina, Ynez Vargas

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair McKay led the meeting participants in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chair McKay then opened the meeting to comments from the public.

BFT Legal Counsel Jeremy Bishop, stated public comments are to be directed towards items on the agenda and items of general interest to the Board. Public comments are limited to three (3) minutes per person and thirty (30) minutes in total, unless directed otherwise by the Board. Public comments will start with those who have signed up in advance to speak.

Emily Pearce, resident of Benton County, spoke in favor of expanding public transit service.

Dori Luzzo-Gilmour, resident of Richland, spoke in favor of students riding public transit.

**No Written Public Comments were received.**

**5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair McKay asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

BFT Legal Counsel Jeremy Bishop proposed an addition to agenda item 12, a third topic for the Executive Session. Mr. Bishop stated there will be an Executive Session under RCW 42.30.110(1)(b), RCW 42.30.110(1)(g), as well as RCW 42.30.140(4)(b), an update to collective bargaining, which was the additional item.

***Director Bloom moved to approve the revised agenda, and Director Becken seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.***

**6. RECOGNITIONS**

**A. Resolution 27-2024 Retirement of David Thomas**

Senior Manager of Transportation Tony Kalmbach read the Board resolution recognizing David Thomas, who was not present, for his 19 years of service.

***Director Bauman moved for approval of Resolution 27-2024. The motion was seconded by Director Bloom and passed unanimously.***

**B. Resolution 28-2024 Recognizing Operator of the Year Vanessa Walsh**

**C. Resolution 29-2024 Recognizing Support Staff Member of the Year Christopher Lilyblade**

**D. Resolution 30-2024 Recognizing Team of the Year, Fixed Route Dispatch: Andrea Benson, Ryan Dudley, Timothy Hedding, Nathan Miller, Emily Pearce, and Penny Thielke**

Chief Operations Officer Joshua Rosas presented Operator of the Year and Team of the Year for Board recognition, highlighting the achievements noted in their nominations.

***Director Bloom moved for approval of Resolution 28-2024 and 30-2024. The motion was seconded by Director Beauchamp and passed unanimously.***

Chief Planning & Development Officer Kevin Sliger presented Support Staff Member of the Year Christopher Lilyblade, highlighting his achievements.

*Director Bloom moved for approval of Resolution 29-2024. The motion was seconded by Director Becken and passed unanimously.*

**7. CITIZENS ADVISORY NETWORK (CAN) REPORT**

Mr. Ulises Navarro provided a report on the Citizens Advisory Network and highlighted the agenda items discussed at their regular meetings in June and July of 2024.

**8. CONSENT AGENDA**

Chair McKay presented the Consent Agenda items and invited a motion.

**A. May 9, 2024, Regular Board Meeting Minutes**

**B. May & June Voucher Summaries**

**C. Resolution 31-2024 Authorizing the Interim General Manager to Accept the Completion of the Chassis Wash and Lift Replacement Project**

**D. Resolution 32-2024 Authorizing the Acceptance of the Bus Stop Pad Construction and Amenity Installation Contract #1348 with ESF Solutions, LCC, as Complete**

*Director Bauman moved for approval of the Consent items. The motion was seconded by Director Bloom and passed unanimously.*

**9. ACTION ITEMS**

**A. Resolution 33-2024 Authorizing the Interim General Manager to Award Contract #1456, On-Call Marketing and Media Placement Services, to Hunter Marketing**

Senior Manager of Customer Service Brian Lubanski presented a resolution to award the contract for on-call marketing and media placement services to Hunter Marketing.

*Director Bauman moved for approval of Resolution 33-2024. The motion was seconded by Director Bloom and passed unanimously.*

**B. Resolution 34-2024 Authorizing the Interim General Manager to Enter into a Contract for the Supply and Delivery of Driver Uniforms with U.S. Linen & Uniform DBA SunWest Sportswear**

Mr. Kalmbach presented a resolution to enter into a contract with U.S. Linen & Uniform DBA SunWest Sportswear for the supply and delivery of driver uniforms.

*Director Bauman moved for approval of Resolution 34-2024. The motion was seconded by Director Grimm and passed unanimously.*

**C. Resolution 35-2024 Authorizing the Interim General Manager to Enter into a Contract with Schetky Bus & Van Sales to Purchase two (2) ADA Minivan Vehicles Utilizing Washington State Contract #07621**

Senior Manager of Fleet Maintenance Terry DeJuan presented a memorandum and resolution for Board approval to purchase two ADA minivan vehicles.

***Director Bauman moved for approval of Resolution 35-2024. The motion was seconded by Director Maier and passed unanimously.***

- D. Adoption of the Modified 2024 Annual Service Plan**
- i. 2024 Revised Annual Service Plan Presentation
  - ii. Public Hearing
  - iii. Resolution 36-2024 Adopt the Modified 2024 Annual Service Plan & Implement Recommended Service Changes as Outlined in the Document

Mr. Sliger presented information on the Modified 2024 Annual Service Plan, including recommended service changes to be implemented, open house opportunities provided for public input, original adoption on November 9, 2023, and proposed modified Annual Service Plan developed in May of 2024.

Chair McKay opened the Public Hearing on the adoption of the Modified 2024 Annual Service Plan to receive comments on the proposed plan; no comments were offered. Mr. Sliger stated a public comment was submitted late in the process, which suggested reconsidering delaying Route 67.

Chair McKay then asked for a motion to approve the accompanying resolution.

***Director Bauman moved for approval of Resolution 36-2024. The motion was seconded by Director Bloom and passed unanimously.***

- E. Resolution 37-2024 Adopt the Chief Executive Officer Compensation Structure and Remove from Nonrepresented Employee Market-Based Salary Structure**

BFT Legal Counsel Jeremy Bishop presented a resolution proposing to retitle General Manager to Chief Executive Officer and removing the Chief Executive Officer position from the nonrepresented employee market-based salary structure and position grades, as it is the only employee of the Board.

***Director Bauman moved for approval of Resolution 37-2024. The motion was seconded by Director Grimm and passed unanimously.***

## **10. DISCUSSION & INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

### **A. Release of 2024-2030 Transit Development Plan (TDP) for Public Comment**

Mr. Sliger presented the 2024-2030 Transit Development Plan, which is a Washington state requirement It was released for public comment. This document is a six-year outlook that details financial plans, service, and capital improvements. Mr. Sliger highlighted the major difference in this plan from last year are the changes to service level projections.

## **11. STAFF REPORTS & COMMENTS**

### **A. Legal Report**

Mr. Bishop announced he had no other news, other than an Executive Session would be held

with possible action afterwards.

## **B. Interim General Manager's Report**

Interim General Manager Sarah Funk stated that Ben Franklin Transit is hosting the Washington State Transportation (WSTA) Conference and State Rodeo. We last hosted this event in 2018, it's an honor and privilege, and all the Board of Directors are invited. It is going to kick off Sunday, August 11, with the state rodeo, which is a driving competition and also includes a maintenance component. Monday through Wednesday, August 12-14, we will have the conference and vendor expo with a packed agenda. She told Board members they are welcome to attend, and registration would be handled through the Executive Office.

Ms. Funk handed out flyers for the Ben Franklin Fair and Rodeo. This year Central Plateau Cleanup Company has agreed to provide reimbursement to Ben Franklin Transit for the cost of fares, so fairgoers will ride free on our buses and paratransit vehicles this year. You will want to purchase your tickets early for the fair because we are going to get you there quickly.

She reported that seven Dial-A-Ride drivers and one Dial-A-Ride dispatcher graduated on July 11. The next hiring event for another Dial-A-Ride class is on Friday, August 2, and their training will start mid-September.

## **12. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Director Didier stated in the last presentation for the long-term plan, there is a comment period, and he would like for them to announce where people can comment online and the dates they can comment. He stated there are a lot of people listening and he does not think they know there's a comment period.

Mr. Sliger explained there is a 30-day public comment period, and they had two open houses already, one virtually and one at Three Rivers. We will also have a public hearing associated with the action to approve at the August 8 Board meeting. He stated people can comment both on Ben Franklin Transit's website and through social media. It is very clear on our website to where you can submit your comments; you can go to the contact page on our website or call customer service and they can relay any comments. Mr. Sliger stated Ben Franklin Transit is legally required to put information out about the comment period and where you can comment in the legal section of the newspaper, which was posted July 8, he believes. The 30-day comment period starts July 8 and ends when we have the public hearing at the next Board meeting.

Director Bloom stated that he noticed the sales tax report was not in the Board packet. He asked if it was up or down. Chief Financial Officer Sarah Funk stated it was flat.

Director Suttle stated that Friday was the first time in Ben Franklin Transit history that employees were not paid on time. There were several drivers that had overdraft fees because they have automatic payments, and a couple of employees had their mortgages denied. He stated that for 40 years, they have been paid every other Friday. He received a bill today from his Department of Transportation physical that he had in April, as it was not paid. Mr. Suttle stated that we have been locked out of vendors recently, couldn't get parts for the buses from Gillig, and McCurley would not give us parts for the Dial-A-Ride vehicles.

Chief Financial Officer Sarah Funk stated that the deposit got released late and took full

responsibility, as a step was missed. They have new people processing payroll, and while it's not acceptable, they were able to fix it on Friday and issue a same-day payment. They issued communication to staff and the team, which they can print, that if people have incurred any overdraft fees, they are happy to work on reimbursing those people. She stated she has contacted all the financial institutions where the employees bank, and if the employees reach out to their financial institutions, they will have letters on file from Ben Franklin Transit, and they are happy to work on waiving any overdraft fees. There was discussion among Board members on meeting the statutory requirement to deposit payroll and the overdraft fees incurred by employees.

Director Bloom stated that he attended the Ben Franklin Transit picnic, he appreciated the time in the park with the rest of the employees.

**13. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. Bishop announced an Executive Session would be held under RCW 42.30.110(1)(b), RCW 42.30.140(4)(b), and RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) for twenty-five (25) minutes. The Board recessed at 6:55 p.m. and returned to open session at 7:20 p.m., when they extended Executive Session for an additional ten (10) minutes. The Board returned to open session at 7:33 p.m. with a motion following executive session.

*Director Bauman moved to extend the Interim General Manager's authority to the August 8, 2024, meeting. The motion was seconded by Director Grimm and passed unanimously.*

**14. OTHER**

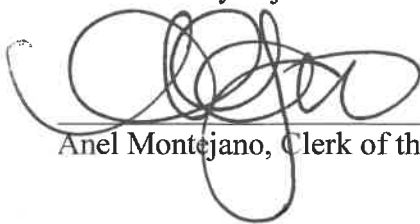
There were no other agenda items.

**15. NEXT MEETING**

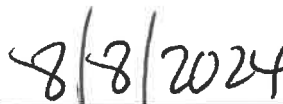
The next meeting will be held Thursday, August 8, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair McKay adjourned the meeting at 7:34 p.m.



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Anel Montejano, Clerk of the Board



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Date