



BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, September 5, 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

MINUTES

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
Benton County	Will McKay	Chair	Present
City of Prosser	Steve Becken	Director	Present
City of Benton City	David Sandretto	Director	Present
Teamsters Union 839	Traci Bronson	Union Representative	Present

BFT Staff: Jamie Bergstrom, Janet Brett, Imelda Collop, Terry DeJuan, Brian Lubanski, Shawna Munyan, Rob Orvis, Joshua Rosas, Kevin Sliger, Solomon Torelli, Kathryn Wall, 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.

Solomon Torelli, resident of Richland, addressed the Board and spoke in favor of public transportation.

No Written Public Comments were received.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair McKay asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Director Bauman moved to approve the agenda, and Director Bloom seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

6. CITIZENS ADVISORY NETWORK (CAN) REPORT

Mr. Dennis Kreutz provided a report on the Citizens Advisory Network. He reported that Frank Cuta attended all three days, and he attended one day of the local Washington State Public Transportation Conference held in Kennewick, and it was extremely beneficial, as they heard about the new technologies that are coming. He commended Ben Franklin Transit staff on their presentations at the conference. Mr. Kreutz presented recommendation 2024-07 to the Board to issue a resolution to vote no on I-2117.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

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

A. August 8, 2024, Regular Board Meeting Minutes

B. August 20, 2024, Special Board Meeting Minutes

C. August Voucher Summary

Director Becken moved for approval of the Consent Agenda items. The motion was seconded by Director Beauchamp and passed unanimously.

8. STAFF REPORTS & COMMENTS

A. Legal Report

BFT Legal Counsel Jeremy Bishop stated no news is good news.

B. Chief Executive Officer's Report

Chief Executive Officer Thomas Drozt addressed the Board and gave them his overall perspective in his first seven days at Ben Franklin Transit.

Mr. Drozt shared highlights of the Benton Franklin Fair and Rodeo service. He stated he was going to be comparing 2023 to 2024, and this year, in comparison to last year, ridership was up 10.4%--21,900 to 24,200 in boardings. Dial-A-Ride Ridership was up 23%, and it is important to give the numbers as well. In 2023, there were 98 boardings and this year 128 boardings, so we saw a little bit of growth.

Mr. Drozt stated our financial plan for each event, is extremely important, also, because that is the driver of the plan and the things we roll out. In comparing 2023 to 2024, there was an 11% decrease in costs. In 2023, we spent \$94,000, and in 2024, we spent \$79,000 for the entire event

and we had higher ridership. He will debrief with the team for next year.

He also touched on how very important it is to him that we have the correct structure in place as far as the overall organizational chart all the way down from the Chief Executive Officer to the frontline staff. He noticed some holes in it and started posting those jobs. He knows we have some work to do in the finance area and trying to shore that up and have contingent offers out to a Senior Finance Manager, which is a critical role. Rob Orvis has stepped in and has been him holding it together and getting us through week by week.

Mr. Drozt touched on Route 123, as there are two main changes to that route. It no longer serves the mall Monday through Saturday. Riders wishing to access the mall can connect with the Route 50, and there is a contingency plan for that. Also, Route 123 will now service Queensgate Transit Center, as well.

He added that when he went on the Ben Franklin Transit website, he did not see a dashboard for KPI's, Key Performance Indicators, and he thinks that is very important. We are working on creating a dashboard so that we can be transparent with the performance that we are delivering, whether it's on-time performance, cleanliness of the buses, customer complaints, kudos, MBMF--which means miles between mechanical failures--that shows the health of our buses and how well they are running. Looking just on the surface, fixed route is in the high 80th percentile; our goal is 92 percent. We will also list within that dashboard what the goals are for each metric. On the Dial-A-Ride side, we are on the top side of the 97-98 percentile, which is crucial to those vulnerable riders

He then spoke about the financial health of the agency. He and Rob Orvis did a deep dive into the entire budget looking at it line by line, what was budgeted, what was spent, and actuals up to date from January 1 to August 31. With the information available to him right now, we are 27% under budget overall and will finish the year with no problem and will not have to come back to the Board. He thinks what has helped us was a line item for \$250,000. We did not spend anything on that line item, as it was probably a project that didn't get undertaken and that money didn't get spent. He stated the financial aspect of any agency is extremely important as it drives our work and performance.

9. **BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Director Bauman asked for an update on the mobile fare payment. Senior Manager of Procurement Rob Orvis stated that a contract is being negotiated and we will come up with an implementation schedule to start rolling it out.

Director Bloom stated he appreciated being able to ride the bus to the fair for the Beach Boys concert.

Director Didier stated he did not get a chance to get to the fair, but he wanted to share a story about his two brothers that went to the fair the same night. One took the Ben Franklin Transit bus that was completely full, and the other drove his car, and it took him one and a half hours to get out of the parking lot at the fairgrounds. He stated Ben Franklin Transit buses are faster at getting in and out of the fairgrounds. There was further discussion among the Board members on the parking lot.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Bishop announced an Executive Session would be held under RCW 42.30.110(1)(b) regarding potential real estate acquisition where disclosure would likely increase price and RCW 42.30.140(4)(b) regarding collective bargaining for ten (10) minutes with potential action to be taken at the conclusion.

The Board recessed at 6:28 p.m. and returned to open session at 6.40 p.m., when they extended the Executive Session for an additional five (5) minutes.

The Board returned to open session at 6:45 p.m. and then extended the Executive Session for an additional five (5) minutes.

The Board returned to open session at 6:52 p.m. with no decisions made and no action needing to be taken.

11. OTHER

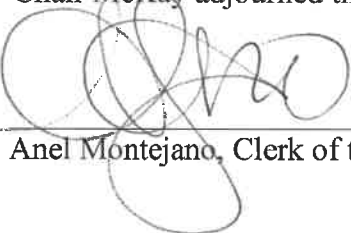
There were no other agenda items.

12. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held Thursday, October 10, 2024, at 6:00 p.m.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Chair McKay adjourned the meeting at 6:52 p.m.



Anel Montejano, Clerk of the Board

10/10/2024

Date