

# Ben Franklin Transit Citizens Advisory Network REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Monday August 18, 2025 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.  
BFT Administration Building - Board Room 1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland, WA

## 1. Convene CAN Meeting: 6:00 PM

## 2. Attendance: 2 Min

Representing	Name	Position	Attendance
CAN MEMBER	DENNIS KREUTZ	CHAIR – RECORDING SECRETARY	PRESENT
CAN MEMBER	ED FROST	PAST CHAIR	PRESENT
CAN MEMBER	DORI LUZZO-GILMOUR	RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR	PRESENT
CAN MEMBER	AMBER WISSENBACH	MEMBER	ABSENT
CAN MEMBER	BERNIE VINHER	MEMBER	PRESENT
CAN MEMBER	BILL BARLOW	MEMBER	ZOOM
CAN MEMBER	BRANDON HARBO	MEMBER	PRESENT
CAN MEMBER	BROOKLYN HUFSTADER	MEMBER	ABSENT
CAN MEMBER	ERIK WATKINS	MEMBER	PRESENT
CAN MEMBER	FRANK CUTA	RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE	ABSENT
CAN MEMBER	LAURIE PRICE	MEMBER	PRESENT
CAN MEMBER	NAYELI ARANDA	MEMBER	ABSENT
CAN MEMBER	ULISES NAVARRO	MEMBER	ABSENT
BFT STAFF	KEVIN SLIGER	PLANNING AND PROJECT MGMNT	PRESENT
BFT STAFF	ALEX SMITH	CFO	PRESENT

## 3. Comments by Guests: 5 Min.

None

## 4. July 2025 Meeting MINUTES Approval: 2 Min.

Discussion: None

Motion to Approve the Minutes by: Dori Luzzo-Gilmour

Second to Approve the Minutes by: Brando Harbo

Minutes Approved Unanimously by a Voice Vote: YES

## 5. Old Business: 10 Min.

A. A follow-up from March regarding having High Schools students as CAN Members.

1. Report by Laurie Price on having High School Students attend CAN Meetings.

MINUTES: Laurie reported that the policy of the High Schools is to not restrict students from participating in any activities after normal school hours.

She recommended that we set a minimum age of 16 years old, and require parent or guardian signed approval for students under the age of 18.

## 6. New Business: 45 Min.

A. Report of the August BFT Board Meeting – Erik Watkins

MINUTES: Erik reported that the majority of the Board Meeting was taken up by Staff presentation and Board discussion of the Transit Development Plan.

Another topic of discussion was whether it would be more economical to have free fare rather than pay for fares collection and associated expenses. BFT is to get back to the Board with a report on cost of fare collection.

- B. Public Comments generally have to be made at the beginning of the Board Meeting rather than after an Agenda Item has been presented by BFT Staff to the Board.  
Status Update of CAN Recommendation: Subcommittee – Brandon Harbo, Dennis Kreutz  
MINUTES: A draft of a proposed Recommendation was distributed and discussed. It was recommended that the draft be simplified and presented to the CAN in the September meeting.
- C. Presentation of proposed modifications to the existing CAN Standing Rules for discussion by CAN Members: Subcommittee – Frank Cuta, Dennis Kreutz  
MINUTES: A draft was distributed and discussed. There were a few minor word corrections and Dennis Kreutz requested that the changes be reviewed by Frank Cuta and the draft be presented to the CAN in the September meeting.
- D. Proposal to fill the positions of Vice Chairperson and Recorder / Secretary.  
MINUTES: After some discussion it was recommended that this be done in December.
- E. BFT presented an update on the status of Frank Cuta's input regarding selection criteria used during BFT Bus purchases: Hilary Carlson notes provided to Dennis Kreutz  
MINUTES:
1. Drivers don't like the equipment box next to the seats.
    1. This box in the current DAR vehicles is part of the Chevrolet Stability Control System and is not moveable. The new vehicles will not have this as we are ordering Ford vehicles.
  2. Need Wi-Fi on all Dial-A-Rides.
    1. We are in the process of bringing on and implementing new Dial-A-Ride software. We are exploring the solution for Wi-Fi on these vehicles alongside the new software or what a reasonable retrofit solution would look like without excess use of taxpayer dollars.
  3. Non-stick flooring.
    1. Flooring has an ASTM D 2047 anti-slip rating.
  4. Better seats.
    1. We did change the seats slightly by removing the pillow top seat cushion for cleaning purposes and the back of the seat will be solid and not be split in the middle. We specify a vinyl seating material for easy cleaning and disinfecting when we have to deal with bodily fluids.
  5. All jump seats on the right.
    1. The vehicles on order will have 3 sets of jump seats on the right side to allow for a 4<sup>th</sup> wheelchair location if needed. There are no seats on the left side in the 3 wheelchair locations.
  6. There is a shoulder restraint issue, they should be adjustable, not fixed.
    1. The vehicles on order will have T-track along the top of the wall above the windows to allow for the shoulder restraint to be moved forward and backwards as needed providing more adjustment.
- F. Next CAN Meeting Proposed Agenda Items:  
MINUTES:
- a. BFT to present 2025-2031 Transit Development Plan as approved by Board in August Board Meeting.
  - b. CAN Subcommittee provide status of CAN Recommendation regarding Washington House Bill 1418 allowing two non-elected transit-using voting members on the BFT Board of Directors.

- c. Public Comments generally have to be made at the beginning of the Board Meeting rather than after an Agenda Item has been presented by BFT Staff to the Board. Status Update of CAN Recommendation: – Brandon Harbo, Dennis Kreutz
- d. Presentation of proposed modifications to the existing CAN Standing Rules for discussion by CAN Members: Subcommittee – Frank Cuta, Dennis Kreutz

**7. BFT Board / BFT Staff Comments: 10 Min.**

MINUTES:

BFT Kevin Sliger showed a slide with the new fixed routes stops on Kennewick Avenue.

**8. CAN Member Comments: 10 Min.**

MINUTES:

Ed Frost asked for status of BFT issuing a printed fixed route schedule. Kevin Sliger responded that it was not likely to be done.

Dennis Kreutz requested that BFT CFO Alex Smith update CAN on the status of BFT posting the 2024 Financial Report. Alex responded that it was being audited by the State and he expects it to be available on the website by September 15.

Dori Luzzo-Gilmour reported that her family participated in the Art In The Park free rides program and that it was very appreciated by the riders she talked to. Kevin Sliger reported that this year there were about 3,000 rides provided.

Erik Watkins inquired whether BFT would be participating in the area wide planning to Transit Orient Development. Kevin Sliger stated that BFT was actively involved.

**9. Assign CAN Member to Attend next Board Meeting: 1 Min.**

Board Meeting September 11, 2025

6:00 PM

BFT Board Room

CAN Member Assigned: Dennis Kreutz

**10. Next CAN Meeting: 1 Min.**

Monday September 15, 2025

6:00 p.m.

BFT Board Room

**11. ADJOURN:**

A. Meeting adjourned at: 7:35 PM

## **AGENDA ITEM – 6B**

The BFT Citizen Advisory Network (CAN) is tasked in CAN Standing Rules – Section 1.1.a to assist BFT by serving as an advisory body to BFT Management and to the BFT Board of Directors. In that capacity the following recommendation is offered.

### **CAN Recommendation 2025-03                      September 11, 2025** **Public Comment in Board Meetings after BFT Presentation**

#### **Issue:**

Public Comments during BFT Board Meetings generally have to be made at the beginning of the Board Meeting rather than after an Agenda Item has been presented by BFT Staff to the Board. Although the Board does ask for Public Comments after some Agenda Items it is normally not the practice to do so unless those items are associated with an ongoing Public Comment period.

An example of a recent Agenda Item would be the presentation to the Board of Resolution 14-2025 authorizing the Chief Executive Officer Authority to Award the Benton County Fairground Project. Additionally, the Resolution requested that the CEO be given the authority to award this contract up to \$500,000 (normal amount is a maximum of \$100,000) without Board approval.

The plan was available to the public a day prior to the Board Meeting in the Board Package. It was two slides with very little information provided. The plan was then presented by BFT Staff in the Board Meeting without an opportunity for Public Comment after the presentation was made.

The Board approved the Resolution, but the work was subsequently cancelled due to additional scope being discovered that would have significantly increased the cost.

#### **Recommendation:**

The Citizen Advisory Network recommends that Public Comment be allowed subsequent to BFT's Staff Presentation to the Board, but prior to Board voting on an issue, for the following:

- a. Schedule changes
- b. Fare or rate changes
- c. Fare collection methods
- d. Route modifications
- e. Capital expense approval or modifications that are in excess of +-\$100K
- f. Operational changes modifications that are in excess of +-\$100K

The Citizen Advisory Network recommends that BFT Staff provide more detailed information in the Board Package and do so in a timely manner that allows for review and comment by the public. It is recommended that for those items shown above that they be listed in the Board Agenda in a section titled "Next Board Meeting Proposed Agenda Items", and that specific information be included in a Board Package available to the public on the BFT Website a minimum of 48 hours prior to the Board Meeting.

# AGENDA ITEM – 6C

## BEN FRANKLIN TRANSIT

[Edited as follows:

[Original Text:

**Citizens Advisory Network Standing Rules**

[Revised Text:

**Citizens Advisory Network Bylaws**

[End of Edit

(Revised DRAFT 03 August 18, 2025)

### **PURPOSE**

[Edited as follows:

[Original Text:

The purpose of this document is to define the duties of the Citizens Advisory Network (CAN) and adopt rules for the transaction of business of the CAN.

[Revised Text:

This document defines the responsibilities of ...

[End of Edit

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

It is the mission of the Ben Franklin Transit (BFT) Citizens Advisory Network to advocate for public transit and to serve as a resource to BFT management and Board of Directors in accomplishing the BFT mission and goals.

## **SECTION 1 – CAN SCOPE AND MEMBERSHIP**

### **SECTION 1.1 - SCOPE**

The Citizens Advisory Network shall assist BFT in the following capacities:

[Edited as follows:

[Original Text:

a) Serve as an advisory body to BFT management and Board of Directors, all actions or recommendations of the CAN are strictly advisory.

[Revised Text:

a) Serve as an advisory body to BFT management and Board of Directors.

[End of Edit

b) Promote and communicate the transit's goals and objectives to the public.

c) Represent interests of the community and assist BFT staff and Board in meeting transit's goals.

d) Expand awareness of the public's perception of BFT activities.

e) Speak on behalf of constituents when commenting on transit's plans, policies, and services.

f) The CAN is not intended to be a complaint resolution or appeals board.

[Edited as follows:

[Insert New Text:

g) All actions or recommendations of the CAN are strictly advisory.

[End of Edit

## **SECTION 1.2 - COMPOSITION**

a) The CAN shall be composed of no less than nine (9) and no more than fifteen (15) members.

b) CAN Members shall serve without compensation except reimbursement for expenses as may be approved by the BFT Board.

## **SECTION 1.3 - MEMBERSHIP SELECTION PROCESS**

a) CAN membership shall reflect the demographics of BFT's Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA); reside within that area; and strive for broad, inclusive, and diverse representation.

[Edited as follows:

[Original Text:

b) Applicants being considered for membership are to be reviewed by BFT management prior to being interviewed by the CAN Recruitment Committee.

[Revised Text:

b) Applicants being considered for membership are to be reviewed and approved by BFT management prior to being interviewed by the CAN Recruitment Committee

[End of Edit

c) BFT staff cannot serve as members of the CAN.

[Edited as follows:

[Original Text:

d) CAN membership may include, but shall not be limited to, representatives of the following interests, groups, or areas:

Areas of Representative Interest:

Fixed-Route Rider Individuals with no car, rides to work

Dial-A-Ride Rider Unconditional rider, conditional rider

Vanpool/Contracted Services Vanpool rider/driver, CONNECT user

Business/Chambers of Commerce Tri-Cities Regional Chamber or other Chambers

Human Service Organizations:

• Medical Community Representative • Tri-City Community Health, dialysis centers

- Mental Health Community Provider • Lourdes Counseling Center, other mental health agencies
- Senior/Disabled Provider • Adult day care, home health care agencies
- Other • WorkFirst, DCYF, DSHS, children's centers

Major Employer Representative PNNL, other top 10 employers  
Student Riders/High School & College Ethnic Community Organizations  
Transit Supporters Retired BFT employees, former BFT Board members  
Law Enforcement Community Liaison Officer  
Educational Agency Representative ESD staff, school district staff, college staff  
Economic Development/Tourism TRIDEC, Tri-Cities Visitor & Convention Bureau  
Recreational/Bicycling/Pedestrian Advocate Bicycle clubs, 3 Rivers Bicycle Coalition  
Clean Air/Good Roads/Energy Advocate Benton Clean Air Agency

[Revised Text: Delete Section d) in its entirety:  
[End of Edit

#### **SECTION 1.4 - APPOINTMENTS TO THE CAN**

- a) The BFT Board of Directors shall have the power to appoint or remove any CAN member at any time it is deemed essential to maintain the integrity of the overall CAN function and to maintain balanced community representation.
- b) A CAN member shall be appointed for a two-year term and may reapply for additional two-year terms.

[Edited as follows:

[Original Text:

- c) Upon completion of a two-year term, CAN members shall relinquish their position unless the General Manager has confirmed reappointment for another two-year term.

[Revised Text:

- c) Upon completion of a two-year term, CAN Members shall relinquish their membership unless the BFT CEO, or their representative for such a purpose, has confirmed reappointment for another two-year term.

[End of Edit

- d) BFT management may develop, subject to Board review, further rules related to seating of members and terms of service as necessary and appropriate to facilitate BFT's needs.
- e) The first two-year term for CAN members during a calendar year will commence the following January 1. The CAN member will be a voting member of the Network following the date their application is approved by the CAN membership.
- f) CAN members representing any of the Chambers of Commerce, TRIDEC, and the Tri-Cities

Visitor & Convention Bureau shall serve at the discretion of the appointing organization except as provided in item a) above.  
g) CAN members who are unable to complete their term may submit their resignation to the Secretary/Recorder.

[Edited as follows:

[Add new section h):

h) A CAN Member who fails to attend in person or virtually, without an excused absence by the CAN Chair, for three consecutive monthly CAN Meetings shall automatically forfeit their CAN membership.

[End of Edit

[Edited as follows:

[Original Text:

i) The General Manager, or a representative appointed by the General Manager for such a purpose, shall serve as a nonvoting member of the CAN and act as the primary liaison between the CAN Chair and BFT.

[Revised Text:

i) The BFT CEO, or their representative for such a purpose, shall serve ....

[End of Edit

j) At no time while serving on the CAN shall CAN members represent themselves as employees or consultants of BFT.

### **SECTION 1.5 - CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Any CAN member having an interest in a matter being considered by the CAN which would tend to prejudice his or her actions in opposition to BFT's mission and goals shall so indicate and refrain from deliberations or voting upon such matter. In addition, should circumstances arise, each CAN member shall ensure that his or her actions do not violate the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine: i.e., that all parties to an argument are to receive equal treatment.

### **SECTION 1.6 - TRANSPORTATION PASSES**

As noted in Section 1.2.b, CAN members shall serve without compensation; however, each CAN member shall always be entitled to a free fare transportation pass for use on all BFT services for their individual use during their term of appointment as a member of the Network.

a) Said pass privilege shall serve as a principal means whereby a CAN member can observe and be informed in connection with their duties and responsibilities to BFT. While using



BFT services and participating in the community, CAN members accept an inherent responsibility to present a positive reflection of BFT.

- b) CAN members are not allowed to share their CAN member BFT pass.
- c) Misuse of transportation privileges will result in termination of the free pass privilege for the current year. Misuse or unauthorized use of transportation privileges exceeding a single incident may result in permanent termination of this privilege and/or the person's removal from the CAN.
- d) Any transit pass provided for CAN members shall be returned at the expiration of the CAN member's final term of office.
- e) One replacement pass will be issued per calendar year.
- f) For an additional lost or destroyed free transportation pass, a charge of \$10.00 will be assessed.

## **SECTION 2 - MEETINGS**

### **SECTION 2.1 - CAN REGULAR MEETINGS**

- a) Unless cancelled in advance by the CAN Executive Committee, the CAN members shall meet at least once per month. The date and time of the CAN Regular Meeting shall be agreed on by members at the previous CAN meeting.
- b) In-person attendance by all CAN members is highly encouraged; however, BFT shall provide accommodation for both in-person and virtual attendance at all CAN meetings.

[Edited as follows:

[Original Text:

- c) BFT's General Manager or his/her representative must receive an agenda one week in advance of all meetings.

[Revised Text:

- c) BFT's CEO, or their representative for such a purpose, ...

[End of Edit

- d) Voting by CAN members participating remotely shall be allowed.
- e) A Quorum shall consist of a majority of the currently appointed CAN members.

[Edited as follows:

[Original Text:

- f) The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the CAN meetings in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Standing Rules.

[Revised Text:

... not inconsistent with these Bylaws.  
[End of Edit

## **SECTION 2.2 - SPECIAL MEETINGS**

a) Special meetings may be held if requested by the CAN Chair.

[Edited as follows:

[Original Text:

## **SECTION 3 - POWERS AND DUTIES**

[Revised Text:

## **SECTION 3 - POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

[End of Edit

The CAN, at the direction of BFT management, may be authorized and empowered to act in an information-gathering and fact-finding role for BFT and shall maintain appropriate confidentiality regarding issues shared by staff or the Board. Any action or recommendation of this committee is strictly advisory. In addition, the CAN is further empowered and authorized to assist BFT management as follows:

- a) To review significant policy decisions under consideration by BFT management including major service changes, fare policy, budget adoption or changes, the development of public and customer facilities, and such other issues or concerns that may impact on the public and customer relations of Ben Franklin Transit and to make recommendations regarding these issues and concerns.
- b) To support efforts to improve public understanding and confidence in the benefits of using public transportation.
- c) To increase recognition of the role public transportation plays in economic vitality and traffic congestion relief in the BFT service area.
- d) To support and help facilitate the efforts to improve communication with community and local business leaders concerning the impact of BFT programs.
- e) To review ridership and customer service programs to identify and recommend practices and technologies that increase ridership and improve customer services.
- f) To identify and recommend programs, practices, and technologies that assist riders in the use of Fixed Route, Dial-A-Ride (DAR), CONNECT, General Demand, and Vanpool services.
- g) To provide a forum for discussion of local public transportation issues and to foster a better understanding of the issues between users and non-users of the system.
- h) The CAN is an advisory group and, therefore, it is strictly understood that all actions and

recommendations made by the CAN are advisory only and do not constitute an action or obligation of the BFT Board of Directors or of any BFT employees. In this capacity, the CAN is not authorized to act as an agent of BFT or to contract or incur any obligations on behalf of BFT.

#### **SECTION 4 – ELECTIONS AND TERMS OF OFFICE FOR OFFICERS**

The CAN shall elect its own officers from among its members and create and fill such other offices as it may determine that its needs require. The CAN shall adopt rules for the transaction of CAN business and shall keep written records of its meetings, transactions, findings, and determinations, which shall become public records.

##### **SECTION 4.1 – OFFICERS**

Officers of the CAN shall consist of a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Recorder, and Past Chair, and such other officers as may be needed, to be elected by the CAN at the last meeting of each calendar year, or as needed, to serve a one-year term commencing January 1 of each year. The duties of officers shall be as follows:

###### **a) Chair**

- Determine meeting dates

[Edited as follows:

[Original Text:

- Determine meeting topics in coordination with BFT General Manager or his/her representative

[Revised Text:

- Determine meeting topics in coordination with BFT CEO or their representative

[End of Edit

- Preside over all meetings
- Develop meeting agenda in coordination with the Secretary/Recorder
- Act as spokesperson for the CAN, interacting with BFT management as requested
- Preserve order and decorum and decide all questions of order
- Attend or appoint the Vice Chair or other CAN member to represent the CAN at monthly BFT Board meetings
- Provide leadership and direction for the CAN
- Perform other duties as may be requested from time to time by the CAN or BFT management
- Shall oversee a nomination in October for the CAN to select a slate of proposed officers for the following year

- Be removed as Chair by vote of a majority of the CAN and/or a BFT Board directive

**b) Vice Chair**

- Have the powers and perform the duties of the Chair in the absence or inability of the Chair to serve
- Perform other such duties from time to time as may be requested by the Chair

**c) Recording Secretary**

- Keep a record of proceedings, have charge of all records, and perform other administrative support as needed. The record of the CAN meetings shall be provided to the BFT Board of Directors.

**d) Past Chair**

- Serve as a nonvoting officer, acting in an advisory role to the other officers

## **SECTION 5 – COMMITTEES**

### **SECTION 5.1 - RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE**

A three-person Recruitment Committee, one of which shall be the Vice Chair, shall be appointed by the Chair by the second regularly scheduled meeting of the calendar year and shall serve for one year. Their duties shall be to assist in the recruitment and recommendation of CAN members and officers.

### **SECTION 5.2 - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary/Recorder, and Past Chair, with BFT General Manager, or appropriate representative, as a nonvoting member. The Executive Committee shall meet at the discretion of the CAN Chair to develop and recommend ways to meet the CAN's goals for accomplishing identified projects.

### **SECTION 5.3 - OTHER COMMITTEES**

The CAN shall have the ability to form such other committees as needed and appropriate. Subcommittees shall report their activities to the CAN and to the BFT Board on a regular basis.

## **SECTION 6 - AMENDMENTS**

[Edited as follows:

[Original Text:

Recommendations of amendments to these Standing Rules can be approved at any regular meeting of the CAN by a two-thirds vote of the total current CAN membership, provided the

proposed amendment was submitted in writing at the previous regular meeting.  
All amendments  
to the Standing Rules of the BFT CAN must be approved by the BFT Board of  
Directors.

[Revised Text:

Recommendations of amendments to these Bylaws...

All amendments to the Bylaws ...

[End of Edit

DRAFT