

April 2026 Monthly Meeting Minutes Ben Franklin Transit Citizens Advisory Network
BFT Administration Building

Meeting was called to order by Chair Dennis Kreutz at 6:00 PM on April, 20, 2026.

A. Present:

Dennis Kreutz, Brandon Harbo, Frank Cuta, Bernie Vinther, Bill Barlow, Brooklyn Hustader

Excused : Erik Watkins, Laurie Price

BFT Staff in attendance:

Pauline Escalera CEO Representative

Gabe Martin Planning Manager

Epideh Acici Transit Planning

B. Minutes of our March meeting - Frank

Frank Cuta made the motion and Bill Barlow seconded that they be accepted as distributed and the motion passed.

C. Old and New Business:

1. BFT Presentation regarding Three Rivers Community Foundation by Gabe Martin
They manage nonprofit funds from various sources and through grants to distribute funds back into the community.

CAN discussed how to get this information to the people who need it.

Frank believes that there is presently no good way to reach this population in the Tri-Cities.

2. We are still discussing key performance indicators. Real numbers have more impact so the CAN has requested that they be used in KPS's instead of just percentage.

The quantity of Fixed Route late to the bus stop (thus possibly missed rides) figure is in the hundred thousand and is a much more graphic detail than just stating 7%.

If there are 3.2M Fixed Route boarding per year = 266K per month.

7% late, possibly missed, stops is 224K per year, 18,620 per month.

Bill Barlow says it is important to think about what the performance indicators are trying to tell. The point was made that we feel it is important that Board Members and Public are provided with numbers as well as percentages to accurately show the impact of the KPI's

Gabe Martin Gabe says they are working on achieving consistent spacing between the vehicles. This should decrease missed rides caused by early and late departures.

3. Brandon Harbo suggests better lighting at bus stops and transit centers.
4. Brandon suggested that Security should be increased in areas where there are increased reports of problems not just uniformly across the properties. CAN would be interested in getting more feedback from riders. The consensus was that less, and mor sporadic presence at Transit Centers, and perhaps not at all on the buses. It was noted that none of the CAN Members who ride frequently have witnessed issues on the buses.

5. Paulene reported that in the current stage of this project they have advanced to putting officers on board with the drivers.
6. Dennis Kreutz questioned if it is necessary to patrol in pairs? What is the cost benefit.
7. Brooklyn likes seeing the security presence at transit centers. She feels that there is a noticeable reduction in angry confrontations among the people waiting for rides.

She also feels there are safety concerns associated with accessing the bus by walking on the shoulder of the road and crossing the road after leaving the bus. It was noted that BFT has been putting signage and audio messaging on the buses to warn against crossing in front of the bus.

8. Eric Watkins raised a concern that BFT not adopt cumbersome safety and security measures that make public transit less desirable.
9. Lori Price favors just a show of security at transit centers rather than an overly strong presence.

D. Report regarding the April Board Meeting: Dennis Kreutz

1. The Board made the decision at the April meeting to let CEO Tom Drozt go and keep Brian Lubanski as Interim CEO.
2. There was more discussion of the fare - no fare issue.
3. There was discussion of using benches at the transit centers with individual dividers to discourage people from sleeping on them. This is known as hostile architecture.

E. Recruitment Committee:

1. Bill Barlow likes a couple of the applicants. We will choose 3 out of 5. Frank would like to know if any of the applicants have ever attended a BFT board meeting and can each of them make a firm commitment to attend our once-a-month meetings.

F. CAN Member Comments:

1. Dennis Kreutz suggested that the CAN should put more energy into thinking about the design concerns associated with future bus purchases. We understand that there is an extensive process done by BFT during bus purchases, but there may be some points that are brought up by CAN Members or those they communicate with.
2. Frank Cuta commented that we have never received any justification as to why the seat padding on the new paratransit vehicles has been reduced, which has become more of an issue now that transit times are increasing.

G. The next BFT Board Meeting is on May 18 at 6:00 PM at the Three Rivers Transit Center, due to the Art On The Bus Awards taking place there that date.

Dennis will represent the CAN.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30PM

Minutes submitted by
Frank Cuta, secretary