

**BEN FRANKLIN TRANSIT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, April 11, 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 and NORMA NELSON (Non-Voting Union Representative)

SHON SMALL excused
CLINT DIDIER and BOB THOMPSON absent

Staff:

Gloria Boyce, Jeremy Bishop – Legal Counsel, Jerry Otto, Keith Hall, Rob Orvis, Wendi Warner, Ali Madison, Ken Hamm, Julie Thompson, Tom Turner 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 to which there were none.

5. **Approval of Agenda**

CHAIRMAN WATKINS noted that the agenda has been updated and the corrected version provided to the Board of Directors.

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

6. **Recognitions**

- A. Resolution 21-2019 Recognizing BFT Employee Robert Burnes’ Years of Service

Ken Hamm, Director of Transit Operations stated that Robert Burnes has served BFT and our community well in the capacity of Coach Operator for thirteen (13) years and eight months (8). Robert was a very dependable employee and was liked by all. It was noted by BFT supervisors that Robert was very good at working with his customers and his fellow employees, besides having

a focus on safety. Robert was an 11-year recipient of the National Safety Council Safe Driver Award; which represents him driving the equivalent of almost a million miles without having a preventable accident. Mr. Burnes performed his duties with professionalism, always striving to do his job to the best of his ability. Robert, thank you for your service to Ben Franklin Transit and our community for nearly 14 years. Best wishes to you in your retirement!

CHAIRMAN WATKINS presented Robert Burnes with a Certificate of Commendation and a BFT Lifetime Pass.

ACTION: RICHARD BLOOM made, and JOHN TRUMBO seconded a motion to approve Resolution 21-2019 Recognizing BFT Employee Robert Burnes' Years of Service. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. **Citizen's Advisory Network** – None

8. **Board Committee Reports**

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

A. Operations & Maintenance Committee, SHON SMALL, Chair

CHAIRMAN WATKINS called for a review of the Operations & Maintenance Committee meeting. None of the Committee Members were present this evening to provide overview. Minutes for the meeting were provided in the Board packet.

B. Planning & Marketing Committee, RICHARD BLOOM, Chair

DIRECTOR BLOOM stated that the Planning & Marketing Committee reviewed the Title VI report which is on the agenda for consent approval this evening. In addition, DIRECTOR BLOOM stated the Committee reviewed the Status of New Service and the Transit Development Plan. The "Bubble Bus" was also discussed, an April 1st social media marketing upload. Lastly, a brief discussion regarding the preparations for the Benton Franklin Fair and Rodeo was held.

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

C. Administration & Finance Committee, STEVE BECKEN, Chair

DIRECTOR BECKEN stated the Administration & Finance Committee discussed the Total Rewards Policy Resolution Authorizing the General Manager to Adopt the Total Rewards Policy for BFT Regular, Full-Time, Non-Represented Employees. Additional items discussed were the Status of New Service and the Transportation Development Plan. DIRECTOR BECKEN concluded that routine business was discussed specifically the notification of upcoming bids the sales tax report.

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

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

- A. Approval of March 14, 2019 Regular Board Meeting Minutes
- B. March Voucher Summary

March 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 April 5, 2019.

Payroll

Check Register Number	Check Number/ Number		Date of Issue	In the Amount	
504-19	80219	80236	03/01/2019	\$449,856.55	Payroll
505-19	80237	80254	03/15/2019	\$467,598.06	Payroll
506-19	80255	80271	03/29/2019	\$492,812.04	Payroll

Total \$1,410,266.65

Non-Payroll Vouchers

Check Register Number	Check Number/ Number		Date of Issue	In the Amount	
116-19	70729	70734	03/01/2019	\$17,551.83	MDSE
117-19	70735	70771	03/08/2019	\$201,452.78	MDSE
118-19	ACH TRANS		03/08/2019	\$514,506.52	ACH TRANS
119-19	70772	70847	03/15/2019	\$160,814.53	MDSE
120-19	2779	2781	03/22/2019	\$229.00	TRAVEL ADV
121-19	ACH TRANS		03/22/2019	\$431,863.80	ACH TRANS
122-19	70848	70928	03/22/2019	\$214,472.88	MDSE
123-19	ACH TRANS		03/28/2019	\$197,665.33	ACH TRANS
124-19	70929	71000	03/29/2019	\$408,057.04	MDSE

Total: \$2,146,613.71

Check register numbers 504-19 to 506-19 and 116-19 to 124-19;

In the total amount of: \$3,556,880.36

- C. Resolution 22 – 2019 Rescinding Resolution 19-2019 Authorizing the General Manager to transfer two vehicles to Link Transit Authority
- D. Resolution 23 – 2019 Establishing that the Public Involvement and Comment Period for BFT’s Draft 2019 Title VI Program & Language Assistance Plan Update Commence
- E. Resolution 24 – 2019 Authorizing the General Manager to Approve Out of Country Travel for Steven Davis to attend APTA’s 2020 Emerging Leaders Program

CHAIRMAN WATKINS read aloud the items on the Consent Agenda. The floor was opened for comments and questions. CHAIRMAN WATKINS called for a motion on the Consent Agenda as presented.

ACTION: RICHARD BLOOM made, BOB KOCH seconded a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

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

10. Action Agenda

- A. Resolution 25-2019 Authorizing the General Manager to Adopt the Total Rewards Policy for BFT Regular, Full-Time, Non-Represented Employees

Wendi Warner, Director of Human Resources and Labor Relations stated that the Total Rewards policy defines salary and benefit elements which comprise the basis of BFT's Total Rewards program for non-represented staff; governs the philosophy, schedule and methodology for regular evaluation of program elements; and provides guidance for modification of program elements.

This policy is intended to provide sufficient clarity and guidance for key decision makers to assess the effectiveness of current programs and practices, and to determine what actions may be needed to improve the effectiveness of BFT's Total Rewards program.

Total Rewards components are identified as:

1. Compensation
2. Health Insurance
3. Paid Time Off
4. Investment
5. Retiree Benefits

On a biannual basis, the Human Resources department will evaluate each component of the Total Rewards program to determine the Agency's status with regard to market comparability and the affordability and sustainability of rewards. The process of evaluation of each Total Rewards component is set forth in detail within the policy.

ACTION: BOB KOCH made, STEVE BECKEN seconded a motion to approve Resolution 25-2019 Authorizing the General Manager to Adopt the Total Rewards Policy for BFT Regular, Full-Time, Non-Represented Employees. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

- B. Resolution 26-2019 Approving the Signing of WA State Department of Ecology Grant Agreement for One All-Electric Bus

Julie Thompson, Senior Budget & Grants Analyst stated that during the February 2019 Board Meeting the Board of Directors were notified that BFT had been awarded \$500,000 towards the cost of one all-electric bus as part of the Department of Ecology's Scrap and Replace Diesel Transit with All-Electric Bus Grant, which is resolved of the Washington State portion of the Volkswagen settlement. Staff intended to bring forward, for approval, an authorization to enter into a grant agreement to purchase alternative fuel (electric) vehicles in the future, as they were not approved in BFT's 2019 annual capital budget.

On March 28, 2019, BFT staff received a phone call from the Department of Ecology informing BFT that the Washington State Senate was attempting to redirect the Washington State portion of

the Volkswagen settlement dollars away from public transit bus replacement. The Department of Ecology requested that BFT immediately sign the grant agreement and FedEx it to them. At no time had the Department of Ecology notified staff that funding may be reduced or withdrawn anytime during the grant application process as the disbursement of the Washington State settlement funds had already been determined by the Washington State Governor.

On March 28, 2019, the same day, BFT staff requested and the Assistant General Manager signed the grant agreement at the request of the Department of Ecology as a placeholder for funding knowing that it can be withdrawn, if directed by the Board of Directors.

In addition, on March 12, 2019 the Department of Ecology announced a grant opportunity, which is the federal portion of the Volkswagen settlement, to either replace fossil fuel powered transit busses with all-electric or re-power those busses with an all-electric engine. BFT does intend to apply for this grant as well.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS clarified that this resolution is the approval of the signing of the grant. Ms. Thompson confirmed and added that the resolution also increases the capital budget by the amount needed to purchase the bus. CHAIRMAN WATKINS followed with confirmation that the grant amount covers a large portion of the overall cost of the all-electric bus. Ms. Thompson clarified that the estimated cost of an all-electric transit bus is just under one million dollars and as such this grant would cover approximately half the total cost of the vehicle.

RICHARD BLOOM clarified that the presented \$944,431.00 capital budget revision is the estimated overall cost of one all-electric bus. Ms. Thompson confirmed. RICHARD BLOOM asked the cost of a non-electric bus, for comparison. Ms. Thompson estimated the cost of our last purchased non-electric transit bus to be \$500,000, identifying this grant essentially covers the cost difference from a non-electric to an electric bus. RICHARD BLOOM continued by asking if this approval is to acquire an additional bus above what is currently listed in our Capital Development Plan. Ms. Thompson clarified that BFT does list electric busses on our Capital Improvement Plan but, that BFT staff does not have budget authority to move forward on that plan. RICHARD BLOOM confirmed that we then essentially are bringing a bus purchase forward from the plan and thus the reason for the total bus cost adjustment to the Capital Budget. CHAIRMAN WATKINS added that the cost would not ultimately be any more than what we would be looking at for a non-electric bus.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS noted that BFT currently has an electric bus that is delegated as a “fair weather bus” but that electric bus technology has improved since its purchase. Jerry Otto, Assistant General Manager added that the hope/expectation is to see a 75% improvement to the previous electric buses.

LISA STADE asked how the new bus would do in cold weather conditions. Mr. Otto answered that we will be having an electric bus here at BFT for demonstration, approximately one week of time, to test and review. Mr. Otto continued that in his research, the battery technology has greatly improved including the amount of power to the rear wheels. LISA STADE asked if there are any transit agencies testing the make and model that we are interested in that has more hills and harsher weather than we experience. Mr. Otto replied that Seattle Metro is testing.

RICHARD BLOOM suggested a review of charging options, this suggestion results from a recent meeting with Benton REA. Gloria Boyce, General Manager responded that included in the memo

this evening it states that BFT will be presenting to the Board over the next few months informing the Board of our strategies moving to Alternative Fuels including modes of charging.

ACTION: CHAIRMAN WATKINS called for a vote on Resolution 26-2019 Approving the Signing of WA State Department of Ecology Grant Agreement for One All-Electric Bus. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

11. Discussion & Informational Items

A. Status of New Service

Keith Hall, Director of Planning & Service Development stated progress on the actions approved by the Board at regular and special board meetings in November of 2018 were reported from December through March, and all actions except those identified below had been reported as complete by the February Board meeting.

<u>Approval Date</u>	<u>Board-Approved Action</u>	<u>Status</u>
December 13, 2018	Van-Me-Down Program	Complete
January 31, 2019	Applications Received	10
Through March 16, 2019	Vans Distributed	9*
*As of the date of the Board Meeting April 11, 2019		
March 11, 2019	Extend fixed-route and Dial-A-Ride to 10pm <i>First Two Weeks of Service</i> <i>*Excludes March 12 (snow day); significant snow on the ground during first week of service.</i>	Complete
	Average Fixed Route Boardings (Mar. 11-23)	
	- Weekdays, new later service only	153
	- Saturdays, new later service only	247
	- Weekday (total) change*, from March 2018	+72 (7,608)
	- Saturday (total) change, from March 2018	+241 (3,554)
	Average DAR Boardings (Mar. 11-16)	
	- Weekdays, on new later service*	21 (1,313)
	- Saturdays, on new night service	7 (423)
	Night Taxi Service, Average Weekday Boardings	
	- Capped (March 2018)	82
	- Unrestricted (March 2017)	261
October 2019	Initiation of private-sector service contract and termination of temporary (“demonstration”) services. This transition involves actions and Board approvals in late 2019. <i>Note: Proposals are due April 11, 2019.</i>	In Progress

CHAIRMAN WATKINS noted that this program seems to be running efficiently, adding that this appears to have been a positive move, BFT providing these services in house. Mr. Hall responded that BFT does intend to review the results over the next few months, and that there are more details to be completed/addressed. CHAIRMAN WATKINS commended staff on a job well done in this process. RICHARD BLOOM added that we are hoping to look at completing a review and collecting data on the time of the additional boardings.

B. Department of Ecology Termination Letter

Jerry Otto, Assistant General Manager provided a brief review of the water diversion program which has been in progress for in excess of ten years. This program identified how to divert ground water and storm water to eliminate drainage into the Columbia River. BFT was in a corrective action and tasked with fixing the issue prior to December 31, which BFT did. Mr. Otto continued that on February 28, 2019 he had an appointment with Department of Ecology Officials to review the work and walk the BFT grounds. Following that meeting it was shared with the Board that BFT should be relieved from the Storm Water Permit. Mr. Otto read aloud the first paragraph of the letter received dated March 18, 2019.

Dear Jerry Otto:

The Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has reviewed your Notice of Termination (NOT) of coverage under the Industrial Stormwater General Penn it for the site shown above [BFT Address listed on letter]. Based on the NOT, Ecology is terminating your coverage under the permit as of January 10, 2019, the date Ecology received the NOT, finding the site has met the termination criteria outlined in the Permit under Special Condition S13.

A round of applause was held to congratulate/celebrate this achievement.

C. 1st Quarter Report

Ali Madison, Director of Marketing and Communications presented the 2019 1st Quarter Report. Ms. Madison provided the Board with updates on Total System Boardings, Fixed Route Performance, and Ridership Highlights. Q1 did show a noticeable system-wide decline in ridership compared to the same period in 2018, made dramatic by the experiencing of record snowfall in all service areas in February and leading into March. Fixed route ridership was down 0.5% in January, 28.1% in February, and 7.2% in March. Average Saturday ridership was up in both January and March. Dial-A-Ride saw the biggest decline in February at 28.7% but experienced an increase of 3.7% in January and equal decrease in March. Vanpool, was down a few percent each month, however March numbers are still being received.

Specific impacts during the week of heaviest snow, we saw an average of 3,900 boardings per weekday. During weekdays without considerable snowfall, those boarding counts averaged 7,000, a difference of about 3,000 per day. Ms. Madison noted that BFT shut down the entire system before midday on Saturday, February 9 due to dangerous white-out conditions involving record snowfall, and had an additional weekday service closure for Dial-A-Ride as well as ongoing case-by-case Dial-A-Ride days and fixed route snow detours in February.

Since the service hours extension on March 11, 2019 the ridership trend during those hours is steadily increasing with Saturdays out-trending weekdays for ridership gains during extended hours. Routes 42, 65 150 and 225 are the most productive in the system with the majority of routes meeting or exceeding a 90% on-time performance.

Ms. Madison followed by providing the Board with BFT's Marketing and Outreach efforts which primarily focused on a three-phase campaign to support the launch of our new demonstration services. The service hours extension campaign will continue throughout April and part of May before transitioning to summer promotions. BFT also completed a few special projects in Q1, including the development of a comprehensive 2018 Annual Report. A significant overhaul on our system guide was completed, as much of the content had to be changed to coincide with our many service changes since the last publication. Displays featuring the artwork of BFT's Art Contests finalists were placed at all our local libraries over the prior few weeks, including spring break, and were just taken down today, April 11, 2019. BFT will position one of these displays in all of our lobbies, display them at events and search for additional community placement opportunities throughout the Spring and Summer. The BFT art bus will be re-wrapped next week, school visits to follow shortly.

RICHARD BLOOM clarified the locations of the art display placement.

LISA STADE suggested that Columbia Center Mall might allow a placement of a display near the information booth. Ms. Madison has added this suggestion to her location options and replied with additional location ideas including pediatric hospital wings and the Visitors Center. RICHARD BLOOM suggested using these to encourage participation in the 2019 Art Contest.

LISA STADE asked what the Kennewick school visits are including, what the school is asking for. Ms. Madison replied that so far BFT is being invited to smaller resource fair type events but have not have a chance to bring a bus out to the events as of yet. We will have a chance to have a bus onsite when the Art bus is brought around to the winning locations. LISA STADE identified a possible connection into the school system.

Ms. Madison continued with a review of the increases in our social and digital media analytics. Website traffic ranges from 3,000 to 6,000 users per week. 78% of web traffic is coming from a mobile device.

Ms. Madison, concluded with a review of 2019 major goals and initiatives and status of efforts towards completion, noting 2019 compliance or contractual requirements included the Triennial Review along with Labor Negotiations with BFT's Bargaining Units.

LISA STADE asked about the changes to our Dial-A-Ride reservation process, the reasons for the changes. Ms. Madison responded that overall the changes are in response to a need for greater efficiency with as few changes to our customers, confirmed with Ken Hamm, Director of Transit Operations. Further updates will be provided later this year on those changes.

RICHARD BLOOM asked about the System Amenities Study status. Ms. Madison replied that staff is on track based on where the project is expected to be at this time, even though it is not to conclude until the end of the year.

RICHARD BLOOM asked if we have any metrics on the trip planner or *Where's My Ride* program and if they can be included in future reports. Ms. Madison responded that BFT staff is testing the Where's My Ride app and that those details will be provided in future reports.

LISA STADE suggested that BFT ask for input from the DAR drivers regarding the scheduling changes. Ms. Madison replied that Mr. Hamm has worked to include those members of our team but that it is defiantly a good suggestion and will be added.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS thanked Ms. Madison for her report.

D. Board of Directors High Impact Work Session

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated that something that the Board has previously discussed is how the Board can work together more effectively. Gloria Boyce, General Manager has suggested a representative, Doug Eadie, to work with the Board in a dedicated session to review how the Board can work together better for Ben Franklin Transit. For all members of the Board this would require a time commitment to the workshop day, a phone conversation with Mr. Eadie and a voluntary three-member steering committee.

Ms. Boyce followed with more details. This effort would be focused on the Board managing itself, governing the agency and working well with the General Manager and executive staff. The exercise would include, at the very least, all ten members of the Board, General Manager, BFT Executive Staff and any external stakeholders that the Board decides to include. BFT is excited to move forward with the Board to be the best representation for BFT. BFT bylaws have very little direction on how the Board is governed or what is reported, by whom and when. This exercise would allow BFT to better develop the directions and understanding currently unidentified. This would require the total time commitment of each Director approximately a one-hour phone call with Mr. Eadie; this call develops the program for the workshop exercise. Following the phone call BFT would ask for one-day to complete the group workshop. Following the one-day exercise Mr. Eadie would return with an action plan to move BFT forward. Ms. Boyce identified we would like to complete this process, approximately 45-days, by July.

LISA STADE asked if the legal team would be included. Ms. Boyce noted that that would be a good idea if the Board wishes. LISA STADE clarified the time commitments. Ms. Boyce confirmed the one-hour phone call, the one-day workshop then upon Mr. Eadie's return another half-day to review the action items with the whole team leading then to a half-day with the executive staff.

STEVE BECKEN has other commitments starting May 18th to the end of June.

RICHARD BLOOM is unavailable May 8-12, 2019.

JOHN TRUMBO noted that the weekend of June 19th would, as known at this time, be unavailable for him to attend.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS asked Ms. Boyce to look at sending some type of pole for date availability.

Ms. Boyce asked to confirm LISA STADE's last day of school. LISA STADE responded June 14.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS stated the next step is finding date availability for all members. Another follow-up will be volunteers need for the Steering Committee. RICHARD BLOOM volunteered

to be involved in the Steering Committee. CHAIRMAN WATKINS will be sending out communication for an additional volunteer.

12. Staff Reports & Comments

A. Legal Report

Jeremy Bishop, Legal Counsel stated that we have no need for Executive Session and no other update.

B. Financial Report

Julie Thompson, Senior Budget & Grants Analyst stated for February 2019 Year to Date BFT had \$6.7 million in operating revenue, roughly \$120,000 under prior Year to Date and total operating expenditures are trending just above budget. Fares and Boardings are trending in line with expectations due to the weather. Treasurer's report included March information: deposits are secure, over \$6.1 million remaining in undesignated reserve funds. Sales Tax revenue increased 0.1% in March 2019 for January 2019 business as compared to January 2018. BFT notes a Year to Date increase of 0.1% as compared to the same periods in 2018. Receipts in March for January sales were \$2.55 million.

CHAIRMAN WATKINS confirmed that the under-budget revenue and over-budget expenditures are mainly the result of the weather experienced in February. Ms. Thompson confirmed this to be the main reason and that March appears to be returning to expectations.

RICHARD BLOOM asked if BFT experienced an increase in overtime during the snow event throughout February and March. Ms. Boyce responded that we did experience an increase in the Maintenance Department but budget wise was offset by the reduction in services.

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
 - Federal:
 - No pertinent news.
 - State:
 - BFT received notification yesterday, April 10, that the State Senate passed our Driver Abstract Bill, HB 1360 by a vote of 46-0 allowing WSTIP to collect Driver Abstracts for vanpool drivers. RCW 46.52.130
 - Operations:
 - Operations continue to return to normal with the changing weather; BFT made all scheduled pullouts this month.
 - BFT has brought on four additional employees to assist in returning the fleet to the cleanliness level expected following the weather in February.

- Thursday, April 25 is National “Get on Board” day, previously known as National “Dump the Pump” day promoting public transit and other alternative modes of transportation. Get on Board Day is a national awareness and advocacy day that is all about generating awareness of and increasing support for public transportation among riders and non-riders, elected officials, and stakeholders. With a unified voice, our industry will come together to highlight the many benefits public transit provides to communities. Our Marketing team is putting the final touches on our campaign and BFT will offer free fare for the day. I encourage you all to invite your family and friends and “Get on Board” with us.
- BFT has completed several Jurisdictional Presentations including City of Prosser, Benton County and the City of Kennewick.
- Thank you to Rob Orvis who has stepped up to the Interim Administrative Services Director position following Matthew Branson’s recent departure. Assisting Mr. Orvis is Julie Thompson, Deb Hawthorne and Tom Turner.

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

13. Board Member Comments

- A. JOHN TRUMBO – No report
- B. RICHARD BLOOM – Will be absent May 9 but, working to coordinate City of West Richland Alternate Rich Buel to attend in his absence.
- C. CHAIRMAN MATT WATKINS – No report
- D. BOB KOCH – No report
- E. STEVE BECKEN – Last snow pile has melted!
- F. LISA STADE – No report
- G. NORMA NELSON – Negotiation meetings being scheduled. Three for Maintenance, one for Fixed Route and none set for Dial-A-Ride (DAR), Wendi Warner, Director of Human Resources and Labor Relations and Ken Hamm to review and confirm DAR meetings.

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

16. Adjournment

CHAIRMAN WATKINS adjourned the BFT Board of Directors meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Meeting recorded by:
Catherine Getic, Interim Clerk of the Board
April 11, 2019