



**MINUTES**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING**  
**November 14, 2019**  
**7 p.m.**  
**Ben Franklin Board Meeting Room**  
**1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland WA**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Vice Chair Koch called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. PST

**2. ROLL CALL**

Representing	Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Pasco	Ruben Alvarado	Alternate	Present	
Kennewick	Bill McKay	Director	Present	
Benton County	Shon Small	Director		7:05
Franklin County #1	Bob Koch	Director	Present	
Franklin County #2	Clint Didier	Director	Present	
Richland	Phillip Lemley	Director	Present	
West Richland	Richard Bloom	Director	Present	
Prosser	Steve Becken	Director	Present	
Benton City	Lisa Stade	Director	Present	
The Union	Norma Nelson	Non-Voting Union Rep.	Present	

**3. FLAG SALUTE – VICE CHAIR KOCH asked everyone to rise and join in saying the Pledge of Allegiance**

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT/INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

VICE CHAIR KOCH asked the audience if there was anyone that wanted to make public comment and please keep time limited to three minutes and topics to a single subject.

- **Frank Cuta-** President of the United Blind for Tri-Cities. Concerned about late cancellation rules, no will-call, and the push to get more DAR clients to ride on the Fixed Route where possible.

Questions: How much money is being saved with the new DAR policy? How many people have been taken off DAR/suspended with the new rules?

- **Janice Squires-** Blind (29 yr DAR Client) Never late until change in DAR system. It is not a happy place. No will-call is an issue and is even causing Doctors to have to rush to get them through their appointment and ready for pick-up. It is not efficient. Medical community is displeased, Drivers are not happy.  
Questions: Is this a financial issue to have these policies? Is the new system working for efficiency? What are the detailed stats of the DAR program?
- **Pat Osborne:** Riding since 2012. Expressed concerns to staff, posted on her Facebook and bFT Facebook. Will-call concerns – Had a 5pm pick up and was done with her Doc appt at 4. When called for will-call was told she was late and would have to wait an hour. Office closed at 5. Bus came at 5:47.  
Question: How can you consistently pick up people at the end of the window and have several other clients for that same driver to pick up and drop off after they pick me up and still get to my appointments on time?
- **Bill Hogue (blind)-** Friend was in surgery and it was unclear when his friend would be able to leave the hospital and yet he could not get a will call unless he was under anesthesia. DIRECTOR SMALL asked questions of Mr. Hogue
  - a. Q: How long have you been riding with BFT?
  - b. A: Since 2001
  - c. Q: What has been the change in efficiency in your experience?
  - d. A: A lot of changes not for the Benefit of the riders or the Drivers
- **Serena Grandstaff (BFT Driver/Operator)-** Spoke at Oct meeting. Restrooms still not available. “Band aid” in place since last meeting which doesn’t solve the problem.
- **Shannon-** DAR rider since for 2yr. Has spoken with staff. Went from Kennewick to Pasco and was dropped off at a store that was closed but could not get back on bus because it wasn’t her pickup time. Needed to call into dispatch first to get a new pick up time and had to wait an hour in an area where she didn’t feel safe. She just wants to feel safe
- **Casey –** DAR client since 2007 and agrees with all that has been said. All DAR drivers are family to her and wants Drivers to be treated fairly. BFT needs to help them. Look out for the Drivers.
- **Crystal –** DAR driver (15yr) speaking for clients, DAR transports the neediest in the community. If this was our family or us what would we feel? Changes have made it difficult to get clients to place on time. This means short lunch breaks, no bathroom breaks. Don’t forget who we are here for. A large customer population is the elderly and disabled.
- **Cheryl Irwin –** DAR Driver. Spoke at Oct meeting. Feels a lack of communication in the company. Questioned the Boards function and how do they get the information back to the General public. They {BFT/BoD} need to communicate with the public, as well as the members of the transit. How does the average person get on the BoD? They rely on the BoD to get the service. Wants to have a DAR client on the BoD.
- **Brenda Vanderpool –** Dangerous driving conditions. Referenced the National Safety Council article, “Driving tired and drowsy is like driving under the influence.” Conditions have not changed, and it is dangerous. She had to get off a shift at 10:11pm and start again at 5:25am the next day. She is driving tired and feels it’s unacceptable.

- **Chelsea Frogoza (DAR Driver)** – 3 ½ yr employee. When started was proud how safe the place is. Feels tired and stressed out and drivers not seen as people but as a work force. Doesn't want service to get a bad name and safety should be the number one concern of drivers and passengers.
- **Bradley Matthews** – read a letter of no confidence
- **Matthew Bishop- (Community Member CAN)** Drivers are family to him. Ashamed for the situation.
- **Jim Dean (Coach Operator)**—Pushing time to get routes on time. Safety is an issue especially on RD 68 in Pasco. Need to take another look at the routes
- **Shirley Rice (DAR client)** – Helped get petition signed for bus service. Must ask Doctors how long they will be at their appointments. It is hard to know how long patients will be in an appointment. They must make it clear when they call dispatch how long they will be at an appointment. They should not have to wait 1.5 hr to be picked up.
- **DAR client-wheelchair** – Need to re-instate will-call for medical appointments.
- **UNK Person 4 (Community Member in audience)** – If there are complaints about communication why did everyone leave before the meeting was finished?
- **Linda Kitchen** – (DAR client) Has been client for 23 years. With will-call has to wait 2+ hours for going to the store, labs etc. Very frustrated with the time changes in DAR. Could not use DAR pass for the fair, **Clients should be allowed to use pass for special events.**  
Question: How do we get the notes from the meeting? Suggested placing meeting date and time on hold message for visually impaired.
- **Linda Kitchen** - Positive response: sets her pick up time later than what she needs and if is finished early calls for an earlier pick up time. Understands that she needs to plan a little differently.

VICE CHAIR KOCH asked if there was anyone else to give comment. Seeing no other hands raised, he continued to the next agenda item.

## 5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The November 14 agenda was approved as presented

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [Unanimously]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	<b>LEMLEY</b>
<b>SECONDER:</b>	<b>BLOOM</b>

**6. RECOGNITIONS**

**A. Resolution 69-2019: Recognition of Ron Thomas’ 22.5 Years of Service**

Ken Hamm, Operations Director introduced Ron Thomas and read the resolution. Ron served at Ben Franklin transit since May 4, 1997, starting as a coach operator, promoted to a coach dispatcher and then as a Supervisor since 2013. Ron had a willingness to go above and beyond with his support team. We thank him for his work and wish him the best. CHAIR WATKINS presented Ron with a Lifetime Pass and Certificate of Commendation.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [Unanimously]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	<b>LEMLEY</b>
<b>SECONDER:</b>	<b>MCKAY</b>

**7. Citizen’s Advisory Network (CAN) Report – Ali Madison**

The last CAN meeting was on Monday October 14 and the sole focus of that meeting was for staff to provide a presentation overview of the proposed capital operating budget for 2020 and allow them the opportunity to provide any questions or comments about what was being proposed. To our knowledge today we have received no such questions or concerns or comments. The Board would like to have the language reviewed so it is clear to the audience how it relates to them. Ali agreed that the language of the invitation to participate can be adjusted to be friendlier, as requested by the Board.

Ali asked if there were any more questions, which there were not.

**8. Board Committee Reports – Meeting Notes are included**

- A. Operations & Maintenance Committee Report - cancelled**
- B. Planning & Marketing Committee Report – cancelled**
- C. Administration & Finance Committee – Chair Steve Becken**

Discussed at the meeting was the non-representative employee compensation policy and benefits policy, which is an Action Item for adoption. Also discussed was the state auditor’s accountability audit that’s on the Consent Agenda. A resolution has been forward as an Action item to adopt the 2020 operating capital budget and authorize the filing of fiscal year 2020 federal and State grants. Also, on the Consent Agenda is a resolution authorizing the extension of US Bank contract services and a resolution to authorize the general manager to revise the Procurement Policy procedure guide.

VICE CHAIR KOCH asked if there were any questions. There being none, he continued to the next item on the agenda.

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

Vice Chair Koch listed the items on Consent and asked for a motion.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [Unanimously]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	<b>SMALL Moved to Approve Consent Items A through H</b>
<b>SECONDER:</b>	<b>LEMLEY</b>

A. October 10, 2019 Regular Board Meeting Minutes

B. October Voucher Summary

The October 2019 vouchers were 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 was emailed to the Board members November 11 and certified by the Board Vice Chair at the Regular Board Meeting of November 14, 2019.

C. Resolution 70 - 2019: Award Contract for Leasing Fixed Route Bus Tires

D. Resolution 71 - 2019: Authorize Invitation to Bid for In-Ground Hoist

E. Resolution 72 - 2019: Amend Resolution 06-2019 to purchase up to fifteen (15) Vanpool Replacement Vehicles

F. Resolution 73-2019: Receive and file the WA State Auditor's Office 2018 Accountability Audit Report

G. Resolution 74-2019: Authorize the Extension of the U.S. Bank Contract Services

H. Resolution 75-2019: Accept the Revised Procurement Policy

**10. Action Items**

**A. Resolution 76-2019: Authorize Purchase of Forty (40) Vanpool Replacement Vehicles**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [Unanimously]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	<b>MCKAY moved to Authorize Purchase of Forty (40) Vanpool Replacement Vehicles</b>
<b>SECONDER:</b>	<b>BLOOM</b>

Terry DeJuan, Rideshare Manager presented that in June 2019 BFT received the award letter from Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) for the 2019-2021 VIP in the amount of \$2,574,000 to purchase a minimum of 120 replacement Vanpool vehicles. There are currently 154 vehicles in the fleet that are older than 2010 and 67 of those have over 130,000 miles that meet the guidelines for replacement vehicles. BFT has the option to use Washington State Contract #05916 to purchase the vehicles from Bud Clary Auto Group. The cost per van with make ready costs is \$36,180 each or \$1,447,200 for forty (40) replacement vans.

**B. Resolution 77-2019: Adopt the Non-Represented Employee Compensation Policy and Comprehensive Benefits Policy**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [Unanimously]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	<b>BLOOM moved to Adopt the Non-Represented Employee Compensation Policy and Comprehensive Benefits Policy</b>
<b>SECONDER:</b>	<b>STADE</b>

Wendi Warner, HR Director explained that the Compensation Policy serves to document and govern the status and administration of compensatory and performance management provisions relevant to the employment of non-represented personnel and the Comprehensive Benefits Policy serves to document and govern the status and administration of employee benefit and leave provisions relevant to the employment of non-represented personnel. The Compensation Policy will replace policy #1020 and amend policy #2001 and the Comprehensive Benefits Policy will replace policy #2004 and amend policy #2002. The substance and application of these policies shall be reviewed for sustainability and market comparability at least every two years, as referenced in the Total Rewards policy. The Board asked that the employees have an opportunity to review the policy and provide feedback. Also, to amend Appendix A to only show the represented employees. DIRECTOR BLOOM would like the HR Director return to the Board after six months with an update.

**C. Resolution 78-2019: Adopt the FY 2020 Operating and Capital Budgets and Authorize filing of all FY 2020 Federal and State Grants**

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>APPROVED [Unanimously]</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	<b>BLOOM Moved to Adopt the FY 2020 Operating and Capital Budgets and Authorize filing of all FY 2020 Federal and State Grants</b>
<b>SECONDER:</b>	<b>LEMLEY</b>

The Ben Franklin Transit (BFT) Board of Directors met on October 10, 2019 for a Special Budget Meeting to discuss the 2020 proposed operating and capital budget for BFT. At the Regular Board meeting that followed, the Board authorized the release of the proposed Fiscal Year 2020 Operating and Capital Budget for comment. There have been a few changes to the operational capital budget which increased by \$313,000 from the last presentation, and other changes were strictly in funding in alignment to the Initiative 976 which we will continue to monitor throughout the year.

**11. Discussion & Informational Items**

**A. Contracted Services Update – Keith Hall**

The process is taking longer than originally anticipated with contract language. It's the size of the contract relative to what the operator is typically used to operating. We're a bit larger of an urban area than the zones they typically operate in. We originally hoped for full

implementation of the service by January and now we're really looking at a phasing in of this program from March to June and it corresponds to their being able to lease a facility, acquire vehicles or retrofit vehicles for the accessible service and hire and train operators. There will be vehicles to accommodate ADA passengers. Staff proposes that Via begin service at approximately a 50% level of service in March, with full service implementation taking place zone-by-zone through June 2020.

## **12. Staff Reports & Comments**

### **A. Legal Report – Jeremy Bishop, Attorney, Roach and Bishop**

There will be a Board Composition Review at next month's Board meeting. Everyone should have the notice. There will also be an executive session tonight on collective bargaining strategies and performance review.

### **B. Financial Report - Paul Genack, Finance Manager**

Sales Tax revenue increased 7.2% in October 2019 for August 2019 business as compared to August 2019. BFT notes a YTD increase of 4.3% as compared to the same periods in 2018. Receipts in October for August sales were \$3.4M.

## **Operations**

### **C. General Manager's Report**

- Government Affairs Update
  - Federal – Continuing Resolution through November 21, no FTA appropriations yet.
  - State –
    - Thursday & Friday, participated in conversation with WSDOT regarding the effects of I-976. The governor put a stop on approved projects not yet started, they have not yet indicated at the specific grant level which projects are affected.
    - Our state Transit Association has joined the efforts in a lawsuit to look at the legality of I976.
- Operations:
  - Operations met all scheduled pullouts this month.
  - Thank you for approving our 2020 operating and capital budget. We look forward to continued service to our community.
  - Addressed concerns expressed with service changes. The changes are not anything different in the transit industry. Provided examples of cost for a bus trip versus Will-Call. The goal is to look at efficiencies along with customer service. Regarding Dial-A-Ride breaks, operators specifically bargained no breaks in their current contract. That does not mean that we operate that they can't get out of their vehicle to take the break. Further work will continue to make improvements.
  - There were some issues with late pull out due to illness.

- Continue to prepare our Triennial Review response due in January.
- We continue to receive replacement DAR vehicles, all 24 should be onsite by January.
- Regarding our Board Governance efforts, the Steering Committee will give its report either in Dec or Jan.

Ms. Boyce addressed questions regarding double schedules, courtesy calls and the texting module of our system.

### **13. Board Member Comments**

- A. NORMA NELSON – Reiterated issues of Teamsters. Wants to get to the table and get a contract.
- B. CLINT DIDIER – Doesn't support lawsuit against I976.
- C. LISA STADE – Wants to make sure we remain friendly and approachable to the riders and operators.
- D. STEVE BECKEN – Nothing to report
- E. BOB KOCH – Nothing to report
- F. RUBEN ALVARADO (Pasco Alternate) – Happy to be a part of the meeting. Not certain who the representative will be. Would like to invite staff to present at the Good Roads Association.
- G. RICHARD BLOOM – Fatality accidents at Hanford. Trip reduction is being reviewed and bus service at Hanford.
- H. BILL MCKAY – Nothing to report
- I. PHIL LEMLEY – Nothing to report
- J. SHON SMALL – Nothing to report

### **14. Next Meeting**

Regular Board Meeting – Thursday, December 12, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at 1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland, WA 99352

### **15. Executive Session**

At 9:42 p.m. the Board went into Executive session for Collective Bargaining Strategy pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(b). This replaced originally scheduled Potential Litigation pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(i). Jeremy stated that session will take approximately 20 minutes. Staff in session included Gloria Boyce, Jerry Otto, Ken Hamm and Wendi Warner.

At 10 p.m., Jeremy Bishop stepped out of the session to announce an additional 10 minutes



would be needed.

At 10:14 p.m. the session ended and the Board began discussion on the performance review of General Manager Gloria Boyce, pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(g).

**The Board Meeting reconvened at 10:29 p.m. No decision was made.**

**15. Adjournment**

With no other items in front of the board, DIRECTOR STADE moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:30 p.m., which was seconded by DIRECTOR MCKAY. Vote was unanimous.

Pam Loa  
Pam Loa, Clerk of the Board

12-12-19  
Date