



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, June 9, 2022, at 6 p.m.
Ben Franklin Transit Boardroom
1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland, 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 p.m.

Clerk of the Board Janet Brett announced that the written public comments submitted on the Ben Franklin Transit website or emailed to the Executive Office had been distributed to Board members in advance of the meeting.

2. ROLL CALL

Representing	Attendee Name	Title	Status
City of Pasco	Joseph Campos	Director	Present
City of Kennewick	John Trumbo	Alternate	Present
City of Richland	Terry Christensen	Director	Present
City of West Richland	Richard Bloom	Vice Chair	Present
Franklin County #2	Rocky Mullen	Director	Present via Zoom
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	Caleb Suttle	Union Representative	Present

BFT Staff: Hussam Abdurrahman, Ayodeji Arojo, Janet Brett, Carina Cassel, Chad Crouch, Kristopher Darby, Steve Davis, Terry DeJuan, Ed Frost, Keith Gomez, Jason Haggerty, Bill Hale, Keith Hall, Lisa Larson, Cristina Lebedevskiy, Michele LeClair, Christopher Lilyblade, Jeff Lubeck, Mindy Miley, Rob Orvis, Lynn Ramos-Braswell, Devin Roberts, Mike Roberts, Eric Rodriguez, Chris Slack, Jenny Stenkamp, Wendi Warner, Mike Wells

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. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair McKay asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

MOTION:	SANDRETTO
SECOND:	BLOOM
RESULT:	PASSED (Unanimously)

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair McKay opened the meeting to comments from the public. Public comments against reducing the sales tax were made by Solomon Torelli, Ginger Wireman, Frank Cuta, Katherine Torelli, Anna Zivarts, Matthew Sutherland, Britteni Holliman, Norma Nelson, Teresa Benge-Smoot, and Caleb Suttle.

6. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Operations & Maintenance Committee – Director Terry Christensen, who chaired this meeting in Director Joseph Campos’ absence, reported they discussed microphone preferences and two other items that are on the Consent Agenda.

B. Planning & Marketing Committee – Chair David Sandretto reported that this committee discussed microphone preferences and release of the Language Assistance Policy and Title VI Program Update for public review.

C. Administration & Finance Committee – Chair Steve Becken reported this group also discussed microphone preferences and awarding the contract for the EBS consultant, which is on tonight’s agenda as an Action Item. They also talked about the current pay-for-performance system and COLA for nonrepresented staff, also on the agenda as an Action Item. The Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from GFOA for 2020 Annual Financial Report was presented, which is on the Consent Agenda; also discussed was the impact of fuel prices on the operating budget.

7. CONSENT AGENDA

Chair McKay presented the consent items and invited a motion.

A. May 12, 2022, Regular Board Meeting Minutes

B. May Voucher Summary

I, the undersigned **CHAIRMAN/VICE-CHAIRMAN** of **BEN FRANKLIN TRANSIT** Benton County, Washington, do hereby certify that the payroll related services, herein specified have been received and that the following checks are approved for payment for the month of May 2022.

PAYROLL

Check Register Number	Check Number / Number	Date of Issue	In the Amount	
508-22	80890	80892	5/8/2022	641,434.57 Payroll
509-22	80893	80895	5/20/2022	606,040.73 Payroll

Total \$ 1,249,475.30

I, the undersigned **CHAIRMAN/VICE-CHAIRMAN** of **BEN FRANKLIN TRANSIT** Benton County, Washington, do hereby certify that the merchandise or services herein specified have been received and that the following checks are approved for payment for the month of May 2022.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

Check Register Number	Check Number / Number	Date of Issue	In the Amount	
136-22	81014	81063	5/3/2022	188,251.27 MDSE
137-22	81064	81150	5/10/2022	406,044.70 MDSE
138-22	ACH TRANS		5/13/2022	1,002,228.03 ACH TRANS
139-22	2899	2803	5/16/2022	517.50 TRAVEL
140-22	81151	81204	5/17/2022	373,653.02 MDSE
141-22	81205	81268	5/24/2022	216,977.01 MDSE
142-22	ACH TRANS		5/25/2022	385,004.51 ACH TRANS
143-22	81269	81269	5/31/2022	275.64 MDSE

Total \$ 2,582,948.68

- C. Resolution 37-2022: Authorization to Release a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for Architecture and Engineering Services for Future Capital Projects
- D. Accept the Washington State Transit Insurance Pool (WSTIP) 2021 Annual Report and Ben Franklin Transit Risk Profile
- E. Accept the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from GFOA for 2020 Annual Financial Report

MOTION: BECKEN
SECOND: BLOOM
RESULT: PASSED (Unanimously)

8. ACTION ITEMS

A. Resolution 38-2022: Recommendation to Award the Enterprise Business System (EBS) Consultant Contract to Plante & Moran, PLLC

Administrative Services Director Jeff Lubeck presented a memorandum and resolution recommending the EBS consultant contract be awarded to Plante & Moran, PLLC, for Board approval.

MOTION: BLOOM
SECOND: BECKEN
RESULT: PASSED (Unanimously)

B. Resolution 39-2022 Authorizing the General Manager to Proceed with a 3% COLA Increase to Nonrepresented Wages

Director of Human Resources and Labor Relations Wendi Warner presented a resolution authorizing the General Manager to provide a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) to nonrepresented wages effective June 1, 2022. Board members discussed merit pay versus COLA and how each are applied.

MOTION: SANDRETTO
SECOND: BECKEN
RESULT: FAILED 6-3

Roll call vote:
Campos – AYE
Trumbo – NO
Christensen – NO
Bloom – NO
Mullen – NO
Didier – NO
McKay – NO
Becken – AYE
Sandretto - AYE

C. General Manager Search

BFT Legal Counsel Jeremy Bishop announced that the interview committee has a recommendation that will be discussed in executive session.

D. Sales Tax Resolutions 24-2022 and 25-2022

Board members discussed the two tabled resolutions, 24-2022, which would temporarily reduce the sales tax via Board action, and 25-2022, which would put reduction of the sales tax on the ballot for a vote.

Vice Chair Bloom presented a spreadsheet showing the effects on the budget if the sales tax collection was reduced by 1/10th of 1 percent.

Mr. Bishop explained he had received a letter from the attorney general's office stating that they could not give the BFT Board an answer to their questions related to sales tax collection by August 2. Upon further research by Mr. Bishop, it appears that it takes 12 to 24 months to receive an attorney general opinion letter.

After discussion among Board members, Chair McKay asked for a motion on Resolution 24-2022. A motion was made to cancel the resolution.

MOTION:	DIDIER
SECOND:	BLOOM
RESULT:	PASSED (Unanimously)

Chair McKay then asked for a motion on Resolution 25-2022. A motion was made to postpone it indefinitely.

MOTION:	CAMPOS
SECOND:	BLOOM
RESULT:	PASSED (Unanimously)

9. STAFF REPORTS & COMMENTS

A. Legal Report

Mr. Bishop had nothing further to share.

B. Financial Report

Mr. Lubeck presented a financial report, highlighting materials contained in the Board packet. An additional chart was included at the request of the Board showing the impact of higher fuel prices on the operating budget.

C. Interim General Manager's Report

Mr. Frost reported that we are seeing modest gains in fixed route boardings and expect a bump from the free youth pass. There is increasing interest in Vanpool, with 104 vans on the road and an additional nine groups being formed. Dial-A-Ride had two consecutive 900+ days this week, only the second time since COVID.

Parents are very appreciative of the free youth passes, with 13,645 having been distributed thus far.

BFT has had four COVID cases throughout March and April, with four already being reported in June.

There are some great and convenient learning and networking opportunities coming up for Board members and staff later this year. The WSTA Conference will be held in Spokane at the end of August, and the APTA Conference will be held in Seattle in October. The clerk of the board will email conference information to Board members.

Mr. Frost reminded Board members that the BFT Bus Roadeo and Employee Appreciation Picnic will be held on Sunday, June 26.

10. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Director Campos congratulated Mr. Frost on keeping the BFT Vanpool going strong, since Yakima Valley Transit has discontinued theirs.

Director Didier thanked Mr. Frost for his work as Interim General Manager. Chair McKay also expressed his appreciation for his efforts.

Director Suttle thanked his fellow Board members for their honest and open dialogue.

The Board recessed at 7:53 p.m. and returned to open session at 8:00 p.m.

11. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Bishop announced an executive session would be held under RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) to evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for the open General Manager position, anticipating action after the executive session. The Board went into executive session at 8:00 p.m. and returned to open session at 8:11 p.m., when Mr. Bishop stated the Board requested the executive session be extended by five minutes.

The Board returned to open session at 8:17 p.m. Vice Chair Bloom made a motion to authorize the Board Chair to work with BFT legal counsel to negotiate a contract with Rachele Glazier for the position of General Manager of Ben Franklin Transit.

MOTION:	BLOOM
SECOND:	SANDRETTO
RESULT:	PASSED (Unanimously)

12. OTHER

There were no other agenda items.

13. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held Thursday, July 14, 2022, at 6 p.m.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Chair McKay adjourned the meeting at 8:20 p.m.


Janet Brett, Clerk of the Board


Date



1000 Columbia Park Trail, Richland, WA 99352
509.735.4131 | 509.735.1800 fax | www.bft.org

Written public comments submitted online in the order in which they were received:

June 4, 2022, 12:39 p.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Sam Last Name: Carterby City or County: City of Richland Email Address: carterby.s@gmail.com Phone Number: 5094385737
Public Comments:: Please continue to fund our bus programs, not everyone in our area has the means to drive. This is part of a healthy community.
Meeting Date: N/A

June 5, 2022, 10:43 a.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Dee Last Name: N/A City or County: Benton County Email Address: heart4holland@yahoo.com Phone Number: 5033747375
Public Comments:: As a local resident I feel it is important to continue providing the essential services of the current bus system. If funding is cut, many of our counties citizens will have a negative impact.
Meeting Date: N/A

June 6, 2022, 9:05 p.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Sandra Last Name: Vantine City or County: City of Kennewick Email Address: sandrapmurray@hotmail.com Phone Number: 5095281492
Public Comments:: I support expansion of BFT services to the community. I would like to see more park & ride locations and expand services between cities and towns. Our region is growing and BFT is essential to many.
Meeting Date: June 9, 2022 Regular Board of Directors Meeting

June 6, 2022, 9:11 p.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Laura Last Name: Hendrickson City or County: City of Richland Email Address: lauradots@aol.com Phone Number: 5093663229
Public Comments:: Please maintain or increase public transit routes! My adult son with autism depends on your services to live, shop, socialize, and worship. He is excited to attend church using transit now! Thanks.
Meeting Date: N/A

June 6, 2022, 9:14 p.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Lorraine Last Name: TuckerReid City or County: City of Richland Email Address: chonjimartialarts@gmail.com Phone Number: 5095542725
Public Comments:: Please increase public transportation. With gas prices at an all time high and the growth in our area. Public transportation is more important than ever.
Meeting Date: June 9, 2022 Regular Board of Directors Meeting

June 7, 2022, 1:12 a.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Rachel Last Name: Holland City or County: City of Kennewick Email Address: rholland89@hotmail.com Phone Number: 2533260029

Public Comments:: Rising gas prices and choosing a more sustainable option by using city busses there has never been a greater need for bft with more hours, night and swing shift workers deserve the same options too.

Meeting Date: June 9, 2022 Regular Board of Directors Meeting

June 7, 2022, 8:29 a.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Claudia Last Name: Johnson City or County: City of Richland Email Address: cjohnson@probono.net Phone Number: 5093967372

Public Comments:: It costs on average \$10,000+ to have a car. 1/3 of our residents don't drive, because of age, health conditions, and disability. You will disproportionately impact protected groups, race, disability, etc Meeting Date: June 9, 2022 Regular Board of Directors Meeting

June 7, 2022, 8:33 a.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Claudia Last Name: Johnson City or County: City of Richland Email Address: c3j3johnson@gmail.com Phone Number: 5093967394

Public Comments:: You have not done outreach in other local languages. Your decision violates the due process opportunity to comment by those who speak other languages here. Not an inclusive process. Not legitimate.

Meeting Date: June 9, 2022 Regular Board of Directors Meeting

June 7, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Lisa Last Name: Shelton City or County: City of West Richland Email Address: ldshelton1962@charter.net Phone Number: 5099673676

Public Comments:: Once again I urge you to reject irresponsible attempts to cut funding for BFT. Service cuts will harm riders and is a disservice to the community. We demand fully funded transit in the Tri-Cities.

Meeting Date: N/A

June 7, 2022, 5:15 p.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Richard Last Name: Reuther City or County: City of Kennewick Email Address: upstage.reuther@gmail.com Phone Number: 5093753531

Public Comments:: How many people is Amazon hiring? How many people is Darigold hiring? CUT transit funding when the workforce is INCREASING? The population of the area is growing. Cutting transit now makes no sense.

Meeting Date: N/A

June 7, 2022, 9:05 p.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Chris Last Name: L City or County: City of Richland Email Address: clindhartsen@gmail.com Phone Number: 5093667228

Public Comments:: As a regular rider of BFT, I am against the reduction in the tax collected. The longer

term possible impacts of this decision far outweigh any small short term upside this might have in our community.

Meeting Date: N/A

June 8, 2022, 2:26 p.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Naomi Last Name: Solomon Oblath City or County: City of Richland Email Address: hipponay@gmail.com Phone Number: 9177671303 Public Comments:: Please do NOT lower the portion of taxes that goes to BFT! We need to continue to invest in public transit and infrastructure to make our community less dependent on cars, safer & more walkable Meeting Date: N/A

June 9, 2022, 6:46 a.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Jonathan Last Name: Smith City or County: Franklin County Email Address: jcsmith98105@gmail.com Phone Number: 5092489685 Public Comments:: It is shameful that there is yet another racist, classist, ableist effort to gut transit service. Reject the resolution that would reduce the sales tax and [REDACTED] apologize for proposing it.

Meeting Date: June 9, 2022 Regular Board of Directors Meeting

June 9, 12:26 p.m.

To Whom it may concern,

You have my permission to send this email to the entire BFT Board and also you may read it at tonight's Transit Board meeting.

To: Ben Franklin Board and to anyone concerned,

Once again, I am writing this letter to voice my concern over the tabled April resolution to take away a portion of BFT sales tax money. We will remain vigilant and will constantly continue to oppose this resolution. This sales tax was voted in for transit services and was not intended for any other entity. I spend more on an inflated price of a candy bar, the \$1.66 savings it would give to any good paying citizen. I want you to know that I pay taxes too and I want my tax money to stay with the transit.

Thank you

Respectively submitted by,

Janice Squires
Dial A Ride patron of 32 years
2466 Whitworth Ave.
Richland, WA. 99352

June 9, 2022, 4:15 p.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Francesca Last Name: Maier City or County: City of Richland Email Address: francesca.maier@gmail.com Phone Number: 4432088386

Public Comments:: Members of this board have frequently & baselessly accused BFT of being inefficient. The packet proves this assumption as patently false. We need service expansion. Do not reduce tax, expand service.

Meeting Date: June 9, 2022 Regular Board of Directors Meeting

June 9, 2022, 5:01 p.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Laila Last Name: Krowiak City or County: City of Benton City Email Address: lailaheather@hotmail.com Phone Number: 5095549828

Public Comments:: As our region continues to lead the state in growth, our transportation networks must expand proportionately. Transit is a vital component of the network for 1/3 of the population.

Meeting Date: June 9, 2022 Regular Board of Directors Meeting

June 9, 2022, 5:19 p.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Kurt Last Name: Maier City or County: City of Richland Email Address: khm@sciops.net Phone Number: 4432088385

Public Comments:: The Transit board needs to retain local tax authority and stop playing financial games. People need this transit system and your actions affect their daily lives. Have a little dignity for a change.

Meeting Date: June 9, 2022 Regular Board of Directors Meeting

June 9, 2022, 5:50 p.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Ellen Last Name: Baer City or County: City of Richland Email Address: shebaer421@aol.com Phone Number: 5093750217

Public Comments:: Canceling the sales tax for our public transportation support at a time when more of us will be needing these services seems terribly short sighted to me. It will only make life more difficult for us.

Meeting Date: June 9, 2022 Regular Board of Directors Meeting

June 9, 2022, 6:48 p.m.

I Want To...: Submit my Public Comments online First Name: Cigdem Last Name: Capan City or County: City of Richland Email Address: capancigdem@gmail.com Phone Number: 5095786220

Public Comments:: I strongly oppose the sales tax cut proposal that will lead to a reduced bus service, will negatively impact the traffic and parking for both county residents, will unqualify us for state grants.

Meeting Date: June 9, 2022 Regular Board of Directors Meeting