



BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, April 11, 2024, at 6 p.m.

Benton County Administration Building, Room 303
7122 W. Okanogan Place Building E, Kennewick, 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 6:00 p.m.

Clerk of the Board Anel Montejano asked the Board of Directors to state their name when their jurisdiction or organization is called.

2. ROLL CALL

Representing	Attendee Name	Title	Status
City of Pasco	Peter Harpster	Alternate	Present
City of Kennewick	Brad Beauchamp	Vice Chair	Present
City of Richland	Kurt Maier	Director	Present
City of West Richland	Richard Bloom	Director	Present
Franklin County #2	Stephen Bauman	Director	Present
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	Excused
Teamsters Union 839	Caleb Suttle	Union Representative	Present

BFT Staff: Shane Anderson, Brittany Archibald, Tina Braswell, Janet Brett, Imelda Collop, Jamie Cooper, Terry DeJuan, Michaela Dimas, Sarah Funk, Catherine Hamm, Shelley Horton, Brian Lubanski, Gabe Martin, Mackenzie Miller, Anel Montejano, Shawna Munyan, Rob Orvis, Matt Owens, Joe Pomponio, Jonathan Rider, Joshua Rosas, Kevin Sliger, Cristina Templeton, Solomon Torelli, Kathryn Wall, Wayne Welle, Michael Wells, Heather Willoughby

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. ACTION ITEM

A. **Resolution 17-2024 Board Meeting Participation Policy**

BFT Legal Counsel Jeremy Bishop presented a resolution to adopt Public Participation at Public Meetings of the Board of Directors. If the Board wants to extend the time for public comment beyond 30 minutes, a motion and vote would need to take place. The Board agreed to have 30 minutes for each of the two separate public comment periods in tonight's Board meeting.

Director Bloom moved for approval of the Resolution 17-2024 as amended to change the reference to council in Page 2, Item H, and city council in VI. The motion was seconded by Director Beauchamp and passed unanimously.

5. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair McKay then opened the meeting to comments from the public.

Jamie Torres, a resident of Kennewick, spoke against the sales tax reduction.

Matt Watkins, Executive Director of the Pasco Public Facilities District, addressed the Board and spoke about the opportunity to work with Ben Franklin Transit and projects in the Tri-Cities area. He also spoke in favor of the public transit system.

Raul Sital, Assistant Superintendent of Operations for the Pasco School District, addressed the Board and spoke in favor of Ben Franklin Transit services and the Youth Passes.

Bill Barlow, a resident of Kennewick and former employee at Ben Franklin Transit, addressed the Board and spoke against the sales tax reduction.

Carol Larkin, a resident of Richland, addressed the Board and spoke against the sales tax reduction.

Ed Frost, a resident of Kennewick and member of the Citizens Advisory Network, addressed the Board on the resolution passed on Board Meeting Participation Policy. He spoke in favor of the Board having the ability to increase the time allotted for public comments.

Alice Arms, a resident of West Pasco and Dial-A-Ride customer, spoke against outsourcing Dial-A-Ride services and sales tax reduction.

Anna Lang, a resident of Pasco, addressed the Board and spoke against raising fares for Dial-A-Ride services and against the sales tax reduction.

Greg Berg addressed the Board and spoke in favor of Dial-A-Ride services.

Scott Cooper, a resident of Kennewick, addressed the Board and spoke against outsourcing Dial-A-Ride services and nurturing the transit services to grow with the growing community.

Written Public Comments received:

Monica, a resident of Pasco, wrote against the sales tax reduction.

Steven, a resident of Kennewick, wrote against the sales tax reduction.

Laila Krowiak, a resident of Richland, wrote against the sales tax reduction.

Lisa Shelton, a resident of West Richland, wrote against the sales tax reduction.

Ryan Learn, a resident of Richland, wrote against the sales tax reduction and commended the Board for their efforts at cost saving and prudent stewardship of taxpayer funds.

Veronika Meiers, a resident of Franklin County, wrote against the sales tax reduction and how ridership has surpassed pre-pandemic numbers.

Debbie Mensinger, a resident of Franklin County, wrote against outsourcing services to Via CONNECT.

Katherine Torelli, a resident of Richland, wrote against the sales tax reduction.

Jacob G, a resident of Pasco, wrote against the sales tax reduction.

Dani Guthrie, a resident of Pasco, wrote against the sales tax reduction.

Rachel LaBelle, a resident of Kennewick, wrote against removal of services.

Aryana Grigsby, a resident of Franklin County, wrote in favor of Ben Franklin Transit services and wants service hours extended.

Patton Salcedo, a resident of Kennewick, wrote in favor of the free Youth Passes.

Hannah Bissell, a resident of Franklin County, wrote in favor of the free Youth Passes.

Solomon Torelli, a resident of Richland, wrote against the sales tax reduction.

Myk Vines, a resident of Richland, wrote in favor of the free Youth Passes.

Priscilla Aguirre, a resident of Kennewick, wrote in favor of the free Youth Passes.

Nayeli Madrigal, a resident of Kennewick, wrote in favor of the free Youth Passes.

Philip Smith, a resident of Kennewick, wrote in favor of the free Youth Passes.

Traci Pierce, a resident of Kennewick, wrote in favor of the free Youth Passes.

Cade Bryan, a resident of Richland, wrote against the sales tax reduction.

Colin Berry, a resident of Richland, wrote against the sales tax reduction.

Francisco Birrueta wrote against limiting public comments at board meetings.

6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair McKay asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Director Bloom moved to approve the agenda, and Director Bauman seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

7. RECOGNITIONS

A. 2023 Safety Star Award

Tracey Christianson, Executive Director with WSTIP, presented Ben Franklin Transit with the 2023 Safety Star Award for having a stable safety record in the Fixed Fleet, Paratransit Services, Vanpool and Administrative Operations. A \$5,000 check to be used to recognize the employees of Ben Franklin Transit and a trophy are forthcoming. Ben Franklin Transit last received this award back in 2015.

B. Resolution 18-2024 Retirement of Bill Barlow

Chief Planning and Development Officer Kevin Sliger read the Board resolution recognizing Bill Barlow, who was present, for his 6 ½ years of service.

Director Bloom moved for approval of Resolution 18-2024. The motion was seconded by Director Becken and passed unanimously.

8. CITIZENS ADVISORY NETWORK (CAN) REPORT

Mr. Matthew Howie provided a report on the Citizens Advisory Network. He recognized the Citizens Advisory Network members that were in attendance in person and stated others would be attending via Zoom. The Citizens Advisory Network provided its recommendations to the Board, and there was discussion among Board members.

9. CONSENT AGENDA

Chair McKay presented the Consent Agenda items and invited a motion.

A. March 14, 2024, Regular Board Meeting Minutes

B. March Voucher Summary

C. Resolution 19-2024 Authorizing the Interim General Manager to Declare Vehicles Listed in Exhibit A as Surplus and Dispose of per BFT Policy FIN-108

D. Resolution 20-2024 Adopting the Revised Fixed Assets Policy FIN-102

Director Bloom moved for approval of the Consent items. The motion was seconded by Director Becken and passed unanimously.

10. DISCUSSION & INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Downtown Pasco and West Pasco Update

Chief Planning and Development Officer Kevin Sliger presented updates on the Downtown Pasco Transit Center and West Pasco projects. An open house was held on the Downtown Pasco concept design to gather information from the public to understand their needs in this

area.

B. Special Events Update

Mr. Sliger presented updates on the special events that Ben Franklin Transit will be providing beyond the scheduled services, noting this year services to the River of Fire will not be provided.

C. Financial Report

Chief Financial Officer and Interim General Manager Sarah Funk presented the financial report, highlighting materials contained in the Board packet.

D. Climate Commitment Act Update; Impact of I-2117

Ms. Funk provided an overview of the Climate Commitment Act (CCA), highlighting materials contained in the Board packet.

11. ACTION ITEMS

A. Sales Tax Reduction Resolution

i. Staff Presentation

Ms. Funk presented on the Impact of Sales Tax Revenue Reduction, including Ben Franklin Transit's approach to addressing uncertainty, operating impact, impact of sales tax reduction, and possible scenarios.

Mr. Sliger presented on the service reductions, service change timeline, capital impacts, and possible service changes.

ii. Public Comments

Public comments were given encouraging the Board members to maintain the current sales tax rate by residents Emily Pearce, Sandra Vantine, Sean Taylor, Ed Frost, Allison Dabler and Anna Ruiz Kennedy.

iii. Resolution 21-2024 Regarding Submission of a Proposition to the Voters to Reduce Sales and Use Tax for Public Transportation

Mr. Bishop presented a memorandum and resolution regarding submission of a proposition to the voters to reduce sales tax.

Director Maier moved to table Resolution 21-2024 until 2026. The motion was seconded by Director Beauchamp and passed unanimously.

B. Resolution 22-2024 Authorizing the Interim General Manager to Purchase Real Property for the West Pasco Transit Center up to \$3 Million

Mr. Sliger presented a memorandum and resolution to authorize the Interim General Manager to purchase real property and associated acquisition costs for the West Pasco Transit Center. There was discussion among the Board members about the property for the West Pasco Transit Center.

Director Didier moved to table Resolution 22-2024 to the next meeting. The motion was seconded by Director Maier. The motion passed 8-1 with Directors Grimm, Beauchamp, Maier, Bauman, Didier, McKay, Becken and Sandretto voting in favor and Director Bloom

voting against.

C. Resolution 23-2024 Authorizing the Interim General Manager to Award the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Software to Workday, Inc. and System Integrator AVAAP

Ms. Funk presented a memorandum and resolution to award Enterprise Resource Planning Software to Workday, Inc. and System Integrator AVAAP.

Director Bauman moved for approval of Resolution 23-2024. The motion was seconded by Director Bloom and passed unanimously.

12. STAFF REPORTS & COMMENTS

A. Legal Report

Mr. Bishop announced he had no news, but there will be an executive session.

B. Interim General Manager's Report

Ms. Funk reported that April is National Distracted Driving Awareness month. Safety and compliance with state and federal regulations to ensure our drivers and the community we support remain safe are part of the agency's core values of safety.

She reported that we have a new hire that has joined our team, Michael Garlock, who is the new Senior Manager of Safety and Security. He brings an extensive background and is looking forward to developing a safety culture in the coming months for the agency.

Ms. Funk reported that last week, the second class of the year of fixed route drivers graduated; we had 10 of them. We are having a hiring event on May 3 for Dial-A-Ride drivers, with the class expected to start on June 3.

She provided a snapshot of upcoming events: the Autism Journey at the Benton County Fairgrounds, followed by the Senior Times Expo at Southridge on April 16. On April 20 for Earth Day we will participate at the REACH Museum from 12 noon to 4:00 p.m. featuring our new Vanpool models that will be on display, and then on Earth Day itself on Monday, April 22, we will be offering free rides on fixed route only.

She stated currently there are 27 people out on leave of absence.

13. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Director Didier asked Ms. Funk about the last comment she made on the 27 people out. Ms. Funk stated there are 27 people out on leave of absence, that is a statistic that Rachelle had been reporting on for months over months. She stated that we had been hovering around a little bit higher, that the number of people who are out on various leaves of absence is currently 27 and in prior months has been as high as 35 or 36. We have been able to return some people to work, which is good news. Director Suttle asked if that included vacations and daybook. Ms. Funk stated that she would have to double check on that, as she got the statistic that was previously reported and does not want to state the wrong information.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Bishop announced an Executive Session would be held under RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) for 10 minutes with anticipated action afterwards. The Board recessed at 9:43 p.m. and returned to open

session at 9:48 p.m.

Upon return, a motion was made to approve Chair McKay entering into an amendment to the General Manager contract with Rachelle Glazier that will become a consultant contract upon completion of her using her leave time and the consultant rate would be \$100 an hour.

Director Bauman moved for approval. The motion was seconded by Director Maier and passed unanimously.

A second motion was made to approve the appointment of Sarah Funk as the Interim General Manager, subject to the policies of Ben Franklin Transit.

Director Bauman moved for approval. The motion was seconded by Director Beauchamp and passed unanimously.

15. OTHER

There were no other agenda items.

16. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held Thursday, May 9, 2024, at 6 p.m.

17. ADJOURNMENT

Chair McKay adjourned the meeting at 9:53 p.m.



Anel Montejano, Clerk of the Board

05/09/2024

Date