



Benzie Transportation Authority

Executive Committee

September 12, 2023 @ 5:30PM

14150 US 31 Beulah, MI 49617

Minutes approved as presented February 13, 2024

1. Call to Order by Chair John Morse at 5:32PM
2. Roll Call to determine quorum: Present: Dorene Strang, Jeanette Feehely, Chris Kitchen and John Morse. Excused: Evan Warsecke Staff Present: Jessica Carland and Nancy Hunt.
3. Welcome and Recognition of Visitors: None
4. Correspondence: Email from Feeheley regarding the E.D. Evaluation and attached to the meeting minutes per Feeheley's request.
5. Approval of June 13, 2023 meeting minutes: **Motion** by Strang to approve minutes as amended with a small change to wording. Supported by Feeheley all ayes, **motion carried.**
6. Amendments/Additions to Agenda: None
7. Public Comment: None
8. Approval of Agenda **Motion** by Kitchen to approve the agenda as presented. Supported by Strang. All ayes, **motion carried.**
9. Call for Conflict of Interest: None
10. Old Business
 - a. Draft Board Policies: Kitchen has begun working on the Conflict of Interest and Whistleblower policies. He is close to finishing and will share the results with this committee when finished. Feeheley and Kitchen both shared their perspectives on whether there is a need for Board Policies. Both agreed that it is important to have strong governance, with outlines for expectations if it can be done in a manageable amount of time. Discussion regarding the purpose for the policies that are to be created followed. The committee agreed that Morse will begin working on the Board Self Assessment and Competencies and Traits and Skills policies. Strang will work on the Public Communications policy and Carland will work on a Code of Conduct policy.
 - b. Draft Board/Committee Job Descriptions: The Committee discussed a few changes that offered more clarification to the job descriptions. The committee requested that Carland send all committee packets to the entire Board rather than just the committee members.
Motion by Kitchen that the board committee job descriptions be presented to the full board at the November Meeting and recommended for adoption. Support by Strang. Roll Call Vote: Ayes - Strang, Kitchen and Morse. Nays - Feeheley, **Motion carried.**

11. New Business

- a. Executive Director Evaluation: An annual evaluation of the E.D. was conducted. The results were compiled by Hunt and presented to the committee. Morse thanked everyone for taking the time to complete the evaluation. The evaluation reflects a very competent E.D. with a couple of areas that show opportunities for improvement. Feeheley shared her thoughts on the evaluation process. The committee discussed that in the future, a member of the Executive Committee may be a better person to hold the responsibility of conducting and compiling the evaluation rather than a BTA employee.

12. Public Comment: None

13. Committee Roundtable: Kitchen appreciated the support he received after the loss of a close family member. Morse will be out of the country September 20th through October 8th.

14. Next Meeting: Late February - Date TBD

15. Adjournment @ 6:59PM

Nancy Hunt, Recording Secretary

Date

Attachment; Feeheley Response to Email Regarding ED Evaluation Form

September 7, 2023

TO: Nancy Hunt

Cc: Jessica Carland

RE: Response to the email regarding an ED Evaluation Form

FROM: Jeannette Feeheley

Regarding the issue of an ED evaluation, I choose not to comply with a procedure that the Board had not developed nor approved -- that is -- filling out an ED evaluation form that the Board had also not developed or approved. I realize that while it was delivered by the HR Manager, she was only acting under the Board Chair's instructions. Also, I have no objection to the effort put into the form by a fellow Board member at the Chair's request. I simply do not agree with the procedure. I appreciate that others may believe it is just great, and they are certainly entitled to their opinion.

My objections are several.

1. Last year, when the Board decided to offer Jessica Carland a contract to fill the position of ED, it was my motion and my firm intent that it be a three year, not a one year contract. By doing so, the Board finally ridded itself of the previous time-consuming negotiation/wrangling it allowed itself to suffer every year under the previous ED with an annually renewable one year contract. Jessica has completed only year one of her contract. After three years are up, a long performance review might be in order, but certainly it is premature at this time. I also supported an automatic 3% raise in the contract's successive two years to the salary originally established. Therefore, I believe a three page grading system of Ms. Carland's performance is not only inappropriate at this time, but more importantly, unnecessary and a waste of the very Board time that the Board's three year commitment was established to avoid.
2. The contract did, however, state that an annual performance evaluation would be conducted. The procedure for conducting such has not been developed by the Board. With the accolades continually expressed to the ED by Board members over the past year, it is obvious that no Board member has found her performance unsatisfactory. So, to satisfy this provision of the contract, the procedure I would support at this date would simply be a two-question survey of Board members who wish to participate. The two-questions would be:
 - A. *Do you believe the ED has, in general this past year, satisfactorily performed the responsibilities outlined in the Job Description of her Contract? YES or NO*
 - B. *Is there any further comment you wish to state at this time?*

This gives any Board member all the opportunity for detail that he/she may wish to

provide without requiring the rest of us to do so without our consent.

3. Another objection I have is the use of a subordinate employee under the supervision of the ED to view every Board member's evaluation of her superior and tally the results. I did not believe it appropriate to use an employee, that is, the HR Director, in this manner when the previous ED was undergoing scrutiny but my objections were a minority position on the Board. Never-the-less, I continue to believe it highly inappropriate to put any staff member subordinate to the ED in what I feel is a compromising position for her, regardless of how highly we and the ED might regard that staff member. An evaluation by the Board should be done by the Board, period. It does not need to be so unwieldy that it takes a special software program/app and an HR Director to tally seven members' conclusions. We have a competent Treasurer who certainly has proven her capacity to tally a brief survey of only seven members.
4. Another objection I have is the compilation of any written comments. If any Board member wishes to take the time to provide comments about the ED's performance, both that Board member and the ED deserve to have those comments delivered as written, not as interpreted and not as compiled.
5. My own answers to the two-page questionnaire I propose are:

A, Do you believe the ED has, in general this past year, satisfactorily performed the responsibilities outlined in the Job Description of her Contract? YES

B Is there any further comment you wish to state at this time? NO

Having gone to the trouble of providing my thoughts on this issue, I respectfully ask that my written comments here expressed be provided in advance as soon as possible as an addendum to the Sept. 12, 2023 packet of the BTA Executive Committee meeting at which the results of the tally are scheduled to be delivered to the ED. I ask this to save the Exec. Committee time. I also ask that my comments be attached to the Minutes of that same Exec. Committee meeting.

Thanks for your consideration,

Jeannette

(BTA ED Eval. Comments Sept. 2023)