

MOTION:

SECOND:

**RE: AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXTEND THE PILOT PERIOD FOR THE
PARATRANSIT SERVICE IN THE WESTERN SERVICE AREA**

ACTION:

WHEREAS, at its June 6, 2019 meeting the Commission authorized a nine (9)-month pilot period for the paratransit service as part of the Western Local Service restructuring; and

WHEREAS, the nine (9)-month pilot period for paratransit service was intended to allow for the evaluation of the impacts on the efficiency and reliability of the local fixed-route bus service; and

WHEREAS, the paratransit service was implemented in December 2019 as part of the Western Local Service restructuring; and

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2020 the Governor of Virginia declared a State of Emergency in response to the spread of coronavirus which, along with subsequent executive orders, restricted social gatherings, commercial activity, and travel in general; and

WHEREAS, the impacts of the coronavirus response on travel have continued and are expected to continue for an indefinite period; and

WHEREAS, the impacts of the coronavirus response on travel have been such that effective evaluation and performance analysis of the paratransit service has not been possible; and

WHEREAS, management seeks to extend the pilot so that fair evaluation and comparisons to previous service performance can occur.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission does hereby authorize the Executive Director to extend the nine (9)-month paratransit pilot for a period 120 days after western local ridership returns to 75% of the daily average ridership for November 2019.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Executive Director will present the evaluation results and a recommendation for the paratransit service in the western service area to the Commission after the 120 day pilot extension.

Votes:

Ayes:

Nays:

Abstentions:

Absent from Vote:


Alternate(s) Present Not Voting:


Absent from Meeting:



August 27, 2020

TO: Chair Franklin and PRTC Commissioners

FROM: Joe Stainsby 
Chief Development Officer

THROUGH: Robert A. Schneider, PhD 
Executive Director

SUBJECT: Authorize the Executive Director to Extend the Pilot Period for the Paratransit Service in the Western Service Area

Recommendation:

Authorize the Executive Director to extend the pilot period for the paratransit service in the western service area.

Background:

At its June 6, 2019 meeting the Commission authorized the Executive Director to implement the western local bus restructuring plan and to begin a nine (9)-month trial paratransit service pilot. The purpose of the operational pilot was to evaluate the impacts of the paratransit service on the reliability and efficiency of the local fixed route service. The paratransit service pilot, along with the western local service restructuring, was implemented December 9, 2019 and the nine (9)-month pilot period was anticipated to end in September 2020.

In March 2020 the Governor of Virginia declared a State Emergency to help control the spread of the coronavirus which, along with subsequent executive actions, restricted social gatherings, commercial activity and travel in general. These measures quickly began to impact travel and traffic patterns. The disruptions to normal activity have continued to date and have been significant enough that management has determined that a fair evaluation of the paratransit service at this time is not possible.

Because a return to pre-COVID-19 levels of activity remains largely an unknown, management proposes that instead of setting a date for the end of the pilot period a triggering condition and length of time be set for the completion of the service evaluation. Management believes that a reasonable trigger for evaluation to begin again would be average daily ridership on western local routes reaching 75% of the pre-COVID-19 level. Management also proposes that once this

level of ridership is reached a further evaluation period of 120 days take place. Management believes that this strikes a balance between the need for sufficient relative data for evaluation and a speedy completion of the pilot period. Management would advise the Commission once the evaluation period begins again and would come back to the Board with the results of the pilot evaluation and management's recommendation for the paratransit service in the western service area.

Fiscal Impact:

NA