

Executive Committee

June 12, 2024 | 3:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.



Onsite:

Greater Portland Transit District
114 Valley Street, Conference Room A | Portland, ME 04102

Remote:

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84142523243?pwd=RjBWTStDV2R3enB6MzA0Q1haZVFQZz09>

Passcode: 344764 | Webinar ID: 841 4252 3243

Phone: (646) 931-3860 | Telephone participants: *9 to raise hand, *6 to unmute

MEETING AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER	ACTION or INFORMATION
1. Call Meeting to Order (3:30)	Ed Suslovic, Board President	N/A
2. Public Comment (3:30-3:35) The Board of Directors welcomes public comments at this time for items <u>not listed</u> on this agenda at this time. For items listed on the agenda, the chair will allow members of the public to comment following the staff presentation. There is a <i>three-minute time limit</i> per speaker. (Comments will be paraphrased in meeting minutes)	Ed Suslovic, Board President	Information
3. Meeting Minutes (3:30-3:35) Review and approve minutes from the March 28, 2024 meeting.	Ed Suslovic, Board President	ACTION
4. Executive Search Update (3:35-4:00) Staff will provide an update on Metro's search for its next executive director.	Shelly Brooks Chief Financial Officer	Information
5. Compressed Work Week Policy (4:00-4:10) Staff will report on the results of Metro's compressed work week pilot and provide a recommendation to the committee.	Glenn Fenton, Interim Executive Director	ACTION
6. Proposed Tentative Agreement for Metro's Collective Bargaining Agreement with ATU 714 (4:10-4:30) Review of Tentative Agreements between Metro and Amalgamated Transit Union 714 for new Collective Bargaining Agreement.	Glenn Fenton, Interim Executive Director	ACTION
7. South Portland Merger Proposal (4:30-5:00) Discussion of Metro's draft plan for South Portland to rejoin Metro.	Glenn Fenton, Interim Executive Director	Information

<p>8. Future Agenda Items (5:00-5:05)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director Interviews • Update of Agency Personnel Policies • Agency Strategic Planning (Ongoing) • PACTS Initiatives and Reforms (Ongoing) 	Ed Suslovic, Board President	Information
<p>8. Upcoming Meetings (5:05-5:10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ridership Committee – June 18, 2024 at 3:30 pm • Board of Directors – June 27, 2024 at 4:00 pm • Executive Committee – T.B.D. • Finance Committee – August 7, 2024 at 4:00 pm 	Ed Suslovic, Board President	Information
<p>9. Adjournment (5:10)</p>	Ed Suslovic, Board President	ACTION

As of November 9, 2022 Greater Portland METRO is holding meetings of the Board of Directors (and its committees) in hybrid format, both in person at METRO's offices and via webinar. The remote portions of all meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of [METRO's Remote Participation Policy](#) (adopted August 25, 2022) as well as LD 1772, PL 2022 Ch. 666, and 1 MRSA Chapter 13, Subchapter 1.



**Greater Portland Metro Executive Committee
Tuesday, May 7, 2024:
Meeting Minutes:**

Member	Municipality	Role	Status
Ed Suslovic	Westbrook	President & Chair	Present
Hope Cahan	Falmouth	Vice President & Vice Chair	Absent
Paul Bradbury	Portland	Treasurer	Present
John Thompson	Westbrook	Secretary	Present

Staff Present	Identified Members of the Public
Glenn Fenton – Chief Transportation Officer, Interim Executive Director	Kristen Joyner – KL2 Connects
Mike Tremblay – Director of Transit Development	Robert Babbitt – KL2 Connects
Shelly Brooks – Chief Financial Officer	

- I. **With a Quorum in place, this meeting was called to Order By: Ed Suslovic at: 3:31 pm**

- II. **Public Forum:** No members of the public present

- III. **Approval of April 30, 2024 Meeting Minutes:**
 Paul Bradbury motioned to approve the April 30, 2024 meeting minutes, it was seconded by John Thompson. After a roll call vote of the members present, the April 30, 2024 Executive Committee meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

- IV. **Executive Search Discussion:**
 Kristen Joyner lead item 4’s discussion: Executive Search Discussion. Ed and Shelly agreed to work together on the wording to make sure the brochure has all the edits that the board recommended. John Thompson motioned to approve the brochure and ad with the recommended changes, Paul Bradbury seconds the motion. After a roll call vote of the members present, the motion to accept the job advert and brochure with edits were unanimously approved.

- V. **Executive Session (1):**
 Ed Suslovic leads discussion on item 5, the Executive Session. John Thompson motions to start an Executive Session. Paul Bradbury seconds the motion, and after a roll call vote, it is unanimous to begin the executive session.

VI. Future Agenda Items:

- Executive Director Search Process
- Agency Strategic Planning (Ongoing)
- Collective Bargaining Agreement Renewal
- PACTS Initiatives and Reforms (Ongoing)

VII. Upcoming Meetings:

- Ridership Committee – May 15, 2024 at 3:30 pm
- Board of Directors – May 23, 2024 at 4:00 pm
- Finance Committee – June 5, 2024 at 4:00 pm

VIII. Adjournment:

Paul Bradbury makes a motion adjourn the Executive Committee meeting, John Thompson seconds, after a roll call vote, the meeting was adjourned at 5:19 pm.



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM 5

DATE

June 12, 2024

SUBJECT

Compressed Work Week

PURPOSE

Staff is seeking committee approval on compressed work week as a permanent schedule for administration staff.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

In January 2024, administrative staff begin piloting a compressed work week schedule. The schedule was designed to allow staff flexibility in working 10-hour days, Monday through Thursday with varying start and end times, some remote working days, and a ½ hour paid lunch. The administrative office has been closed on Friday's since the testing of this schedule began.

A survey was sent out prior to the start of the pilot, as well as during the testing period. The surveys provided results that demonstrate a majority of staff were interested in testing a schedule of this nature, along with mostly positive feedback on the survey results while the pilot was underway. The pre-pilot survey reflected 84% of Metro's non-union employees were either very interested or somewhat interested in trying a compressed work week. The same percentage (84%) reported that the compressed work week served them well at the end of the pilot period. The surveys are attached for your reference.

It's important to note that there have been no customer complaints received regarding the office closure on Fridays. Additionally, we have not experienced issues with scheduling internal or external meetings. Finally, we have not received any employee complaints regarding staff availability on Fridays.

Based on the positive results experienced during the testing phase of the compressed work week schedule, we are seeking approval to implement the schedule permanently and move to the Board of Directors for approval as well.

FISCAL IMPACT

None.

PRIOR COMMITTEE REVIEW

First Review.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the compressed work week schedule for administrative staff and closure of administrative offices on Fridays, and move to the Board for approval.

CONTACT

Glenn Fenton

Interim Executive Director

(207) 517-3029

gfenton@gpmetro.org

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A- Compressed Work Week Proposal

Attachment B- Pre-Pilot Survey Compressed Work Week

Attachment C- Midpoint Survey Compressed Work Week

Attachment D- Final Survey Compressed Work Week

Gregory Jordan
Executive Director
Greater Portland Metro
10/11/2023

Proposal for a 4-Day Work Week for Administrative Employees at Greater Portland Metro

Introduction

As part of our ongoing commitment to employee well-being, work-life balance, employee retention, and productivity enhancement, the Finance and Human Resource departments propose the implementation of a 4-day work week for administrative employees at Greater Portland Metro. This proposal aims to explore the benefits of a reduced workweek while maintaining high-quality services for our internal and external customers. The proposal includes references from other local municipalities that have successfully implemented a similar work schedule and a plan for a pilot phase to assess its feasibility and impact on our organization.

Background and Rationale

The traditional 5-day work week has been the norm for decades. However, recent research has shown that transitioning to a 4-day work week can bring several benefits to both employees and employers. A compressed work schedule has been associated with increased job satisfaction, reduced burnout, improved mental health, and higher levels of employee retention. Additionally, employees tend to be more engaged and productive during their working hours, leading to potential gains in efficiency and performance.

Other local municipalities, such as the city of Biddeford, Cape Elizabeth, Scarborough, and Gorham, have successfully implemented a 4-day work week for their administrative staff and have reported positive outcomes in terms of employee morale and organizational efficiency. The city of South Portland's pilot phase started on August 7, 2023. These examples demonstrate the feasibility and advantages of adopting this approach for Greater Portland Metro.

Survey Results

A survey was conducted to measure interest in the possibility of a compressed work week among administrative staff. The full survey results can be found in appendix A. Of 17 requested responses, we received 14, an 82% response rate. In general, responses indicate a desire to participate in a compressed work week schedule, with only one response indicating no interest at all. Of the 14 responses provided, 9 think a compressed work week will improve employee morale.



Objectives

The primary objectives of implementing a 4-day work week for administrative employees at Greater Portland Metro are as follows:

- a. Improve Employee Well-being: By providing employees with an extra day off each week, we aim to enhance their work-life balance, reduce stress, and promote overall well-being.
- b. Boost Productivity: By encouraging focused and efficient work during the 4 working days, we anticipate an increase in employee productivity.
- c. Enhance Employee Retention: Offering a more attractive work arrangement can aid in retaining top talent and reducing turnover rates without the budgetary impacts that other incentives (increased pay/benefits) may have. [According to a six-month study which examined the effects of a four-day workweek in the United Kingdom](#), resignation rates declined by 57% during the four-day workweek trial, while 15% of participating employees said that “no amount of money” would entice them to move to a new job with a five-day workweek.
- d. Improve Employee Morale: By offering employees more down time, and an additional day off during the week, employees will be more satisfied with their work arrangements. This will create a more positive work environment by improving employee morale.

Potential Challenges

A 4-day work week will not be without its challenges. Metro staff would need to adjust several aspects of our day-to-day work in order to effectively transition to a 4-day work week without a drop in productivity or availability to the public and other staff. These challenges will likely include:

- a. Staff availability to other staff: A four-day work week would reduce the amount of days where participating staff would be available to other staff who are unable to participate in this program, including bus operators, maintenance staff, etc. This could lead to frustration if expectations are not managed correctly.
- b. Staff availability to the public: A four-day work week would reduce the number of days per week where the public, vendors, and partners could reach certain staff members. This has the potential to result in frustration or delays if not managed well.



- c. Reduced unprogrammed time during office hours: A four-day workweek has the potential to condense meetings and other obligations to four days where they would have previously taken place over five days, pushing more “desk work” to hours outside of the typical workday. Steps should be taken to reduce the number of, and duration of, meetings during standard office hours where possible.
- d. Additional need for “off-day” planning. Occasionally, there may be an issue or opportunity that results in the need for administrative attention on an off-day, such as a major detour, press inquiry, or employee issue. However, Metro is already a 7-day operation, and these items often arise on weekends already. Existing coverage plans for off-hours issues and opportunities will need to be reviewed and refined as needed.

Pilot Phase Plan

To assess the impact of a 4-day work week on Greater Portland Metro, we propose a pilot phase to run for a period of six months. During this phase, administrative departments will transition to the new schedule while closely monitoring its effects. The pilot phase will be structured as follows:

- a. Core Hours: We seek to establish “core hours”, in which staff will generally be expected to be available, virtual or on site. The core hours suggested in this proposal are the hours of 9am to 2pm. This will allow staff flexibility in scheduling their condensed days in a manner that still allows flexibility around start and end times of shifts.
- b. Compressed Days: We seek to establish compressed work days that are in total 10 hours, including a lunch break. We understand that some staff schedule appointments and such during their lunch time, and time outside of the paid lunch of ½ hours will either require additional work time within the work week, or covered through the use of PTO.
- c. Holidays: Staff will receive holiday hours based on their regularly scheduled working hours for that day. Therefore, on a holiday that occurs on Monday-Thursday, staff will receive 10 hours for that day. For holidays that occur on Friday, staff will receive 8 hours, and will need to alter their schedule accordingly- work 32 hours Monday-Thursday. This means staff will still receive 40 hours pay for the week, not 48 hours.
- d. Flexible Scheduling: Refine our existing flexible scheduling options to accommodate departmental needs and ensure continuous service coverage. Where needed, define each employee’s schedule (including office hours and remote working days) and make available to all staff. Ensure that all employees have a similar, or better access (by way of extended morning/evening hours on working days, for example) to relevant management and department directors as they do currently.



- e. Employee Surveys: Conduct regular surveys to gather feedback from participants about their experiences during the pilot phase.
- f. Public Feedback: Monitor public feedback and complaints related to customer service, resolution of issues, and administrative availability during the pilot period. Determine if any negative trends are attributable to the four-day workweek pilot and work to resolve.
- g. Feedback from Unaffected Staff: Monitor feedback from employees unaffected by this proposal and determine if any negative trends are attributable to the four-day workweek pilot. Ensure that excellent support continues to be provided to all staff during the pilot and beyond.
- f. Evaluation and Analysis: At the end of the pilot phase, analyze the data collected and assess the overall impact on both employees and the organization.

Implementation

Upon successful completion of the pilot phase and based on the evaluation results and approval, we will proceed with the organization-wide implementation of the 4-day work week for administrative employees. The following steps will be taken during this phase:

- a. Policy and Communication: Develop a comprehensive policy outlining the guidelines, eligibility criteria, and expectations related to the 4-day work week. Communicate the changes clearly to all employees and address any concerns they may have.
- b. Training and Support: Provide training to managers and supervisors on how to manage the new work schedule effectively and maintain productivity levels.
- c. Continuous Improvement: Establish mechanisms for continuous feedback and improvement to address any challenges that may arise during the implementation phase.

Conclusion

Transitioning to a 4-day work week for administrative employees at Greater Portland Metro represents an exciting opportunity to improve employee well-being, increase productivity, and strengthen our organization's ability to serve the community efficiently. By conducting a pilot phase, we will gather valuable insights to inform the full-scale implementation of this new work schedule. I believe that this initiative aligns with our commitment to fostering a positive work environment and optimizing operational outcomes.

Thank you for considering this proposal. We are confident that the adoption of a 4-day work week will be a transformative step for Greater Portland Metro. We are open to discussing any aspects of this proposal and are available to address any questions or concerns.



Sincerely,

Shelly Brooks
Chief Financial Officer
Greater Portland Metro

Additional Sources:

<https://www.wmtw.com/amp/article/south-portland-city-workers-to-begin-four-day-workweek/44604646>

<https://wgme.com/amp/news/local/biddeford-is-leading-a-movement-for-a-4-day-workweek-maine-labor-market-staffing-labor-shortage-municipalities-human-resources>

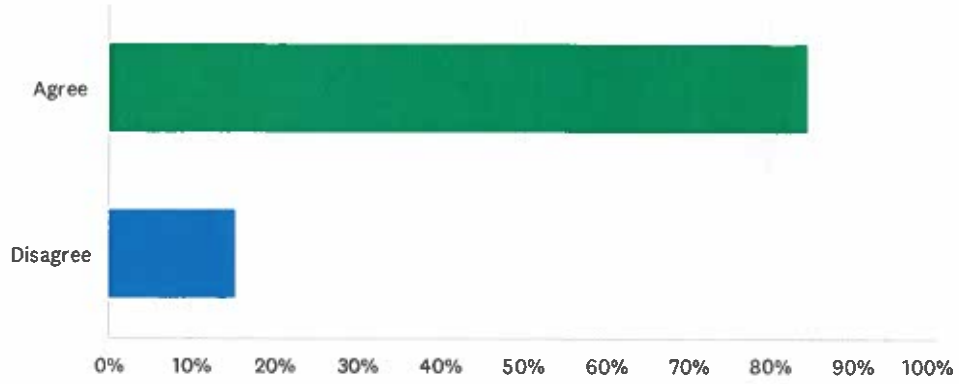
<https://www.shrm.org/executive/resources/articles/Pages/four-day-work-week-pilot-.aspx>

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/60b956cbe7bf6f2efd86b04e/t/63f3df56276b3e6d7870207e/1676926845047/UK-4-Day-Week-Pilot-Results-Report-2023.pdf>



Q1 Are you satisfied with your current work schedule?

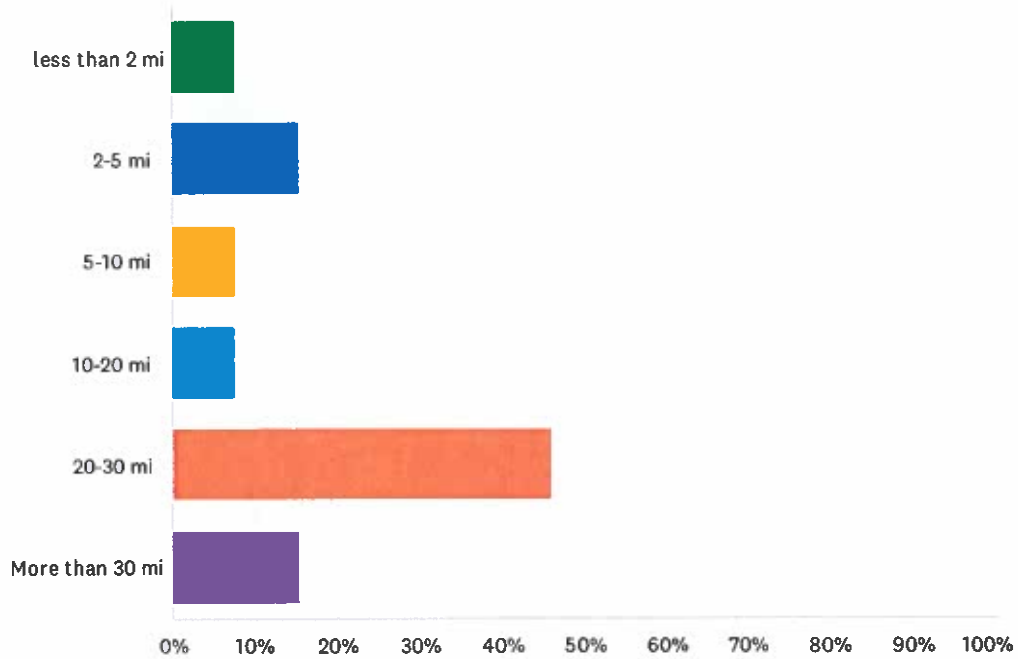
Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Agree	84.62%	11
Disagree	15.38%	2
Total Respondents: 13		

Q2 How many miles do you commute round trip to work?

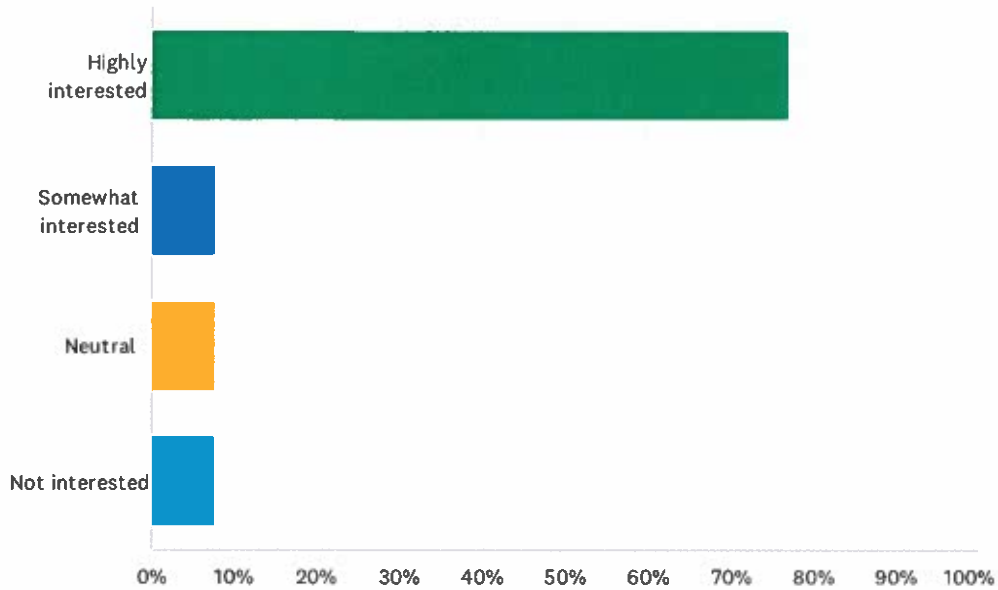
Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
less than 2 mi	7.69%	1
2-5 mi	15.38%	2
5-10 mi	7.69%	1
10-20 mi	7.69%	1
20-30 mi	46.15%	6
More than 30 mi	15.38%	2
TOTAL		13

Q3 What is your current level of interest in a compressed schedule with four, ten hour days?

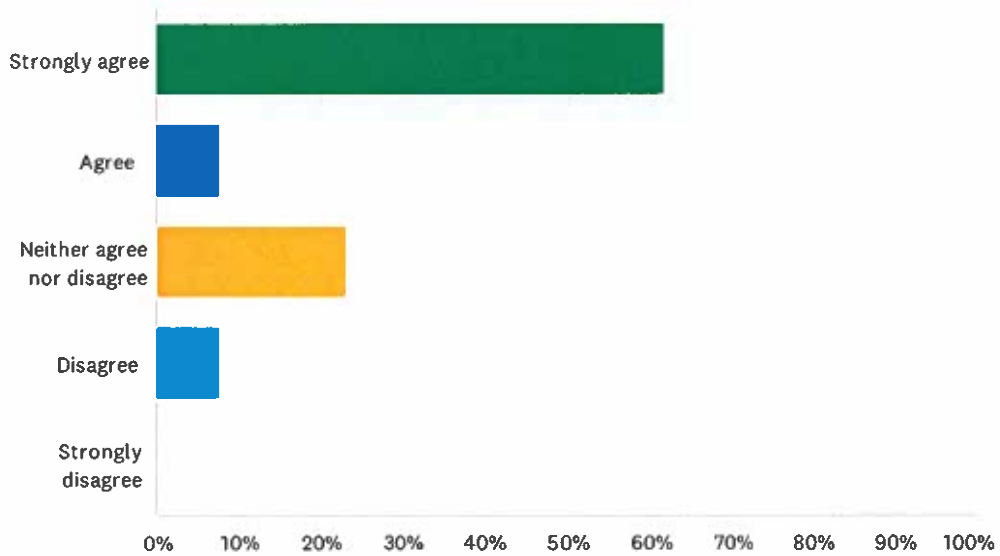
Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Highly interested	76.92%	10
Somewhat interested	7.69%	1
Neutral	7.69%	1
Not interested	7.69%	1
TOTAL		13

Q4 Respond to the following statement: A compressed work-week would improve employee morale.

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	61.54%	8
Agree	7.69%	1
Neither agree nor disagree	23.08%	3
Disagree	7.69%	1
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

Exploring Employee Perceptions of the Compressed 4-Day Workweek

Q5 Please list potential positive impacts of a compressed work-week on you, your department and the services your department offers.

Answered: 11 Skipped: 2

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
1.		100.00%	11
2.		90.91%	10
3.		90.91%	10
4.		63.64%	7
5.		36.36%	4

#	1.	DATE
1	Reduced cost of HVAC in building on Fridays	8/30/2023 2:56 PM
2	Longer office hours, allowing service to majority of shifts	8/23/2023 2:13 PM
3	Would allow me to return to 40-hr pay & benefits	8/23/2023 10:46 AM
4	Having a weekday to attend to personal appointments, etc.	8/23/2023 7:26 AM
5	less time away for appointments as they can be made Friday	8/22/2023 2:48 PM
6	Better work/life balance, travel (three-day weekends!), dr. appointments, etc.	8/22/2023 12:33 PM
7	It would enable training on more routes per week for bus operators.	8/22/2023 12:14 PM
8	Having 3 days off will allow more time with family	8/22/2023 11:49 AM
9	MEET WITH NIGHT CREW LONGER	8/22/2023 11:34 AM
10	Meeting-free time in which to do desk work, if necessary, on Friday	8/22/2023 11:29 AM
11	Help me to focus more on others things that need my attention	8/22/2023 11:14 AM

#	2.	DATE
1	Improved work/life balance for employees	8/30/2023 2:56 PM
2	Increased Productivity	8/23/2023 2:13 PM
3	Would afford all department members a better work/life balance	8/23/2023 10:46 AM
4	Less commuting, saving time and money	8/23/2023 7:26 AM
5	less traffic during commuting time	8/22/2023 2:48 PM
6	Recruitment incentive for new hires (admin assistant?)	8/22/2023 12:33 PM
7	Reduce the time spent to ramp up and ramp down training.	8/22/2023 12:14 PM
8	Able to book appointments on Friday and not M-Th-and not have to leave during my shift	8/22/2023 11:49 AM
9	TALK WITH VENDORS	8/22/2023 11:34 AM
10	Give me the time to spend with my children	8/22/2023 11:14 AM

#	3.	DATE
1	Extended hours of availability for employees	8/30/2023 2:56 PM
2	Lower Absenteeism	8/23/2023 2:13 PM

Exploring Employee Perceptions of the Compressed 4-Day Workweek

3	May provide for potential utilities cost savings	8/23/2023 10:46 AM
4	Enhanced work/life balance	8/23/2023 7:26 AM
5	Time in AM and PM where there will be less interruptions	8/22/2023 2:48 PM
6	The service our department offers would remain consistent with proper planning.	8/22/2023 12:33 PM
7	Trainees would be "in the zone" longer during training.	8/22/2023 12:14 PM
8	More focused time to work on projects/complete in a day-better productivity	8/22/2023 11:49 AM
9	SCHEDULING JOBS WITH VENDOR'S	8/22/2023 11:34 AM
10	Balancing worl's life and family's one	8/22/2023 11:14 AM
#	4.	DATE
1	Boost Employee Morale	8/23/2023 2:13 PM
2	Potential productivity increases	8/23/2023 10:46 AM
3	Great recruiting tool for HR	8/23/2023 7:26 AM
4	Improved recruitment and retention	8/22/2023 2:48 PM
5	Fridays could be free days (extra time) to go and take photos for work (social media, website, etc).	8/22/2023 12:33 PM
6	The ability to decompress with 3 days off	8/22/2023 11:49 AM
7	INTERVIEWS	8/22/2023 11:34 AM
#	5.	DATE
1	More Satisfied Employees	8/23/2023 2:13 PM
2	Little to no impact to services	8/23/2023 10:46 AM
3	flexibility with child and K9 care	8/22/2023 2:48 PM
4	Major morale booster. This is such a great benefit that (most of the) staff would do whatever they need to do get their job done.	8/22/2023 12:33 PM

Exploring Employee Perceptions of the Compressed 4-Day Workweek

Q6 Please list potential negative impacts of a compressed work-week on you, your department and the services your department offers.

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1.	100.00%	12
2.	41.67%	5
3.	25.00%	3
4.	16.67%	2
5.	0.00%	0

#	1.	DATE
1	Inequity with union employees	8/30/2023 2:56 PM
2	Transition may be difficult	8/23/2023 2:13 PM
3	Long work days, leaving little personal time after work	8/23/2023 10:46 AM
4	Initial transition to longer days/hours	8/23/2023 7:26 AM
5	fatigue	8/22/2023 2:48 PM
6	Not necessarily negative; but, we would need to make a plan for covering work that happens on Friday.	8/22/2023 12:33 PM
7	None.	8/22/2023 12:14 PM
8	a 10 hour shift could be a little fatiguing	8/22/2023 11:49 AM
9	MIGHT AFFECT MORALE WITH THE REST OF THE CREW	8/22/2023 11:34 AM
10	Fewer possible days to book internal or outside meetings. The four remaining days may become more "programmed". Will need to reserve time for desk work Mon-Thur.	8/22/2023 11:29 AM
11	Days are too long compared to having one additional day off	8/22/2023 11:23 AM
12	May be when one of my employee is off, that might affect my Friday off	8/22/2023 11:14 AM
#	2.	DATE
1	Availability of staff on Fridays for events	8/30/2023 2:56 PM
2	Little to no impact to services	8/23/2023 10:46 AM
3	unplanned overtime - something "has" to occur on Friday	8/22/2023 2:48 PM
4	Some employees who do not have this option may have negative attitudes about this.	8/22/2023 12:33 PM
5	Impact on PTO/Holidays. ie Friday holiday-what happens if we are already off?	8/22/2023 11:49 AM
#	3.	DATE
1	Emergency event on Friday and HR cant be reached immediately	8/22/2023 2:48 PM
2	I don't see this as an issue with our staff; but, not everyone will have Fridays off all of the time because things happen on Fridays that will need to be addressed.	8/22/2023 12:33 PM
3	PTO-Do we shift to tracking hours and not days?	8/22/2023 11:49 AM
#	4.	DATE

Exploring Employee Perceptions of the Compressed 4-Day Workweek

1	We would need to improve communications overall to make this work.	8/22/2023 12:33 PM
2	Will we still have flex time to work 7-5 or 8-6	8/22/2023 11:49 AM
#	5.	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Exploring Employee Perceptions of the Compressed 4-Day Workweek

Q7 What could you, your colleagues, and your Supervisor do to reduce or eliminate potential negative impacts of a compressed 4-day work-week?

Answered: 10 Skipped: 3

ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES
1.		100.00% 10
2.		70.00% 7
3.		60.00% 6

#	1.	DATE
1	Increase in office time during ten hour shifts	8/30/2023 2:56 PM
2	Allow Flexibility in Scheduling	8/23/2023 2:13 PM
3	Adjust hybrid work schedules - 2 days office, 2 days remote	8/23/2023 10:46 AM
4	Open and regular communications and updates	8/23/2023 7:26 AM
5	Some friday off and some Monday	8/22/2023 2:48 PM
6	Marketing staff (Mike and me) would make a coverage plan for communications that would be required; such as social media updates, website alerts, etc.	8/22/2023 12:33 PM
7	Talk about potential issues before we roll out	8/22/2023 11:49 AM
8	WOULD HAVE TO TALK WITH CREW TO GET THERE FEELING'S	8/22/2023 11:34 AM
9	Coordinate to ensure that time-sensitive "surprise" tasks have coverage during off-days (as we currently do on weekends or when someone is on vacation)	8/22/2023 11:29 AM
10	all my employees are self sufficient, can operate without supervision	8/22/2023 11:14 AM

#	2.	DATE
1	Flexibility in implementation- Ease into new schedule	8/23/2023 2:13 PM
2	Adjust department begin/end times being mindful of org. needs	8/23/2023 10:46 AM
3	start baby step with 9 hours MOn -Thu and 4 on Friday	8/22/2023 2:48 PM
4	We have been planning to train additional staff on updating the website (HR, Finance info, etc), this will help with job flow.	8/22/2023 12:33 PM
5	Communicate concerns & issues as they come up in the pilot	8/22/2023 11:49 AM
6	LET THEM KNOW IT WOULD HELP WITH TURN OVER FROM SIFT TO SIFT	8/22/2023 11:34 AM
7	Be open and clear to outside colleagues about our hours, and avoid Friday meetings	8/22/2023 11:29 AM

#	3.	DATE
1	Allow some work on Friday's initially	8/23/2023 2:13 PM
2	Provide paid lunch time w/in ME DOL guidelines for non-exempt EEs	8/23/2023 10:46 AM
3	Positive communication	8/22/2023 2:48 PM
4	Work together to make it work for everyone.	8/22/2023 12:33 PM
5	ASSURE THEM I AM STILL REACHABLE BY PHONE IF NEEDED	8/22/2023 11:34 AM
6	Continue to be flexible and responsive to the demands of our jobs even when the office isn't open.	8/22/2023 11:29 AM

Q8 What is your primary concern about the possibility of moving to a compressed work-week?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Some staff won't like it, could hurt morale for these individuals	8/30/2023 2:56 PM
2	None	8/23/2023 2:13 PM
3	Long work days and the impact to my family on days worked.	8/23/2023 10:46 AM
4	I don't have any concerns.	8/23/2023 7:26 AM
5	a few disgruntled employees	8/22/2023 2:48 PM
6	I would need the flexibility to work for a few hours occasionally on Fridays when it's necessary to get work done, attend meetings or events, or make up time from appointments that take place M-Th (for example - dentists offices are closed on Fridays). I don't see this as a concern for me because I often make up time during the week and sometimes have events on weekends. But, we should have some type of policy for non-salary staff? How would holidays work? Etc.	8/22/2023 12:33 PM
7	None.	8/22/2023 12:14 PM
8	My concern/question is about remote work. Will we still be able to work remote 2 or more days a week.	8/22/2023 11:49 AM
9	JUST WORRIED ABOUT WHAT THE CREW'S WILL THINK	8/22/2023 11:34 AM
10	I would not be able to work 10 straight hours during the day due to my family schedule. Work meetings, with some exceptions, would likely need to stay roughly within the current hours of operation (8am-4pm or so). However, the nature of my work lends itself well to doing some work during the evenings, and on weekends if necessary. I expect that, if this proceeds, I'd work some on Fridays when necessary.	8/22/2023 11:29 AM
11	Impact evening activities Mon-Thurs.	8/22/2023 11:23 AM
12	None	8/22/2023 11:14 AM

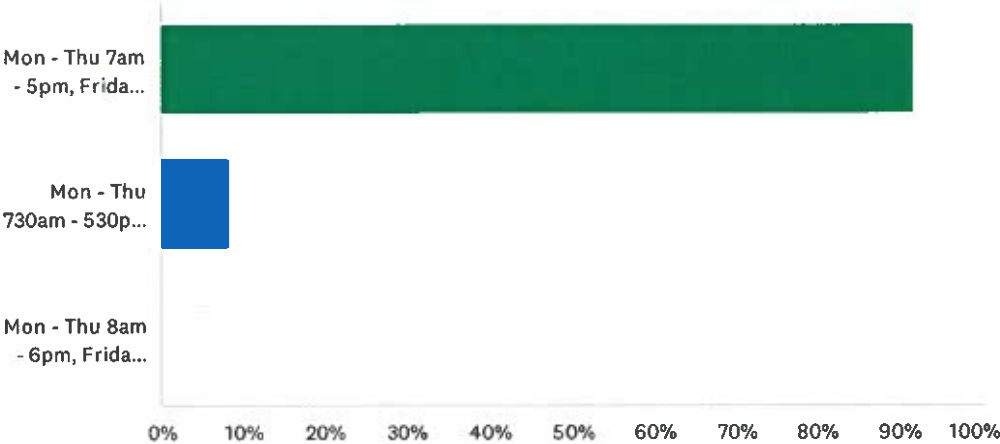
Q9 What would be the primary benefits to you, if you had a compressed work-week?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 2

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Better work/life balance	8/30/2023 2:56 PM
2	Work life balance	8/23/2023 2:13 PM
3	Returning to 40-hour pay and benefits.	8/23/2023 10:46 AM
4	Better work/life balance, less commuting, and having the extra weekday off would be a huge benefit.	8/23/2023 7:26 AM
5	I could get more accomplished in my personal life. My dogs would be happier.	8/22/2023 2:48 PM
6	I would enjoy the option of having Friday's off, mostly to travel, get stuff done at home, and take care of 'my people.' It could be life changing. :)	8/22/2023 12:33 PM
7	More efficient training of bus drivers and I would save on gas commuting to work.	8/22/2023 12:14 PM
8	Having 3 days off in a row will allow me to have more down time for family, friends, travel and chores around the house.	8/22/2023 11:49 AM
9	IT WOULD GIVE ME MORE TIME WITH THE NIGHT CREW IT WOULD GIVE ME MORE TIME TO DO LATER INTERVIEWS	8/22/2023 11:34 AM
10	More personal time to do household chores, do personal appointments, solo leisure activities.	8/22/2023 11:29 AM
11	More time for myself and family	8/22/2023 11:14 AM

Q10 Working a compressed schedule will require us to adjust our hours of operation. What option would work best for you and your department?

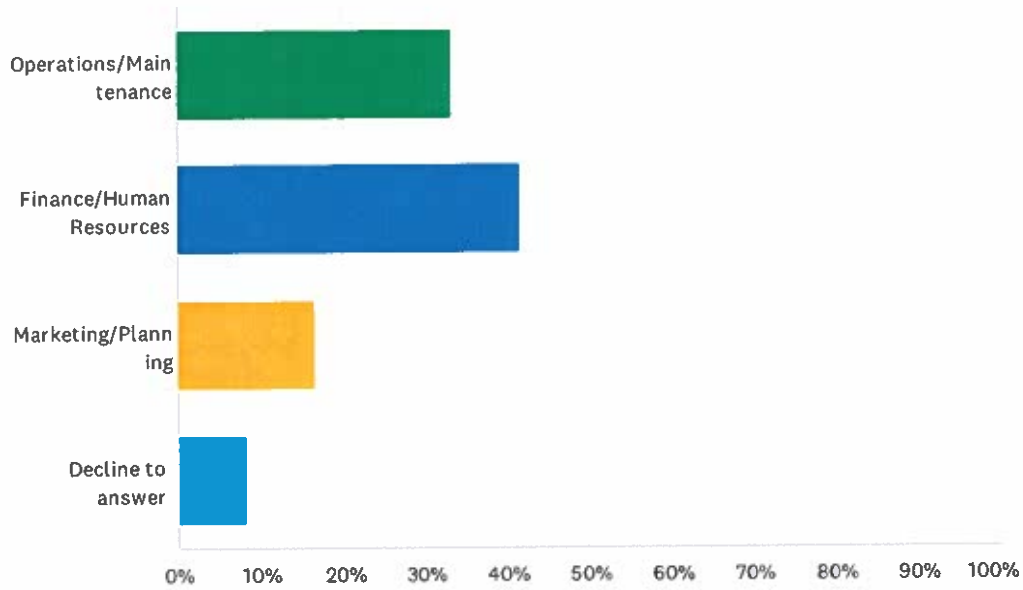
Answered: 12 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Mon - Thu 7am - 5pm, Friday Off	91.67%	11
Mon - Thu 730am - 530pm, Friday Off	8.33%	1
Mon - Thu 8am - 6pm, Friday Off	0.00%	0
TOTAL		12

Q11 What department do you work in?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Operations/Maintenance	33.33%	4
Finance/Human Resources	41.67%	5
Marketing/Planning	16.67%	2
Decline to answer	8.33%	1
TOTAL		12

Q1

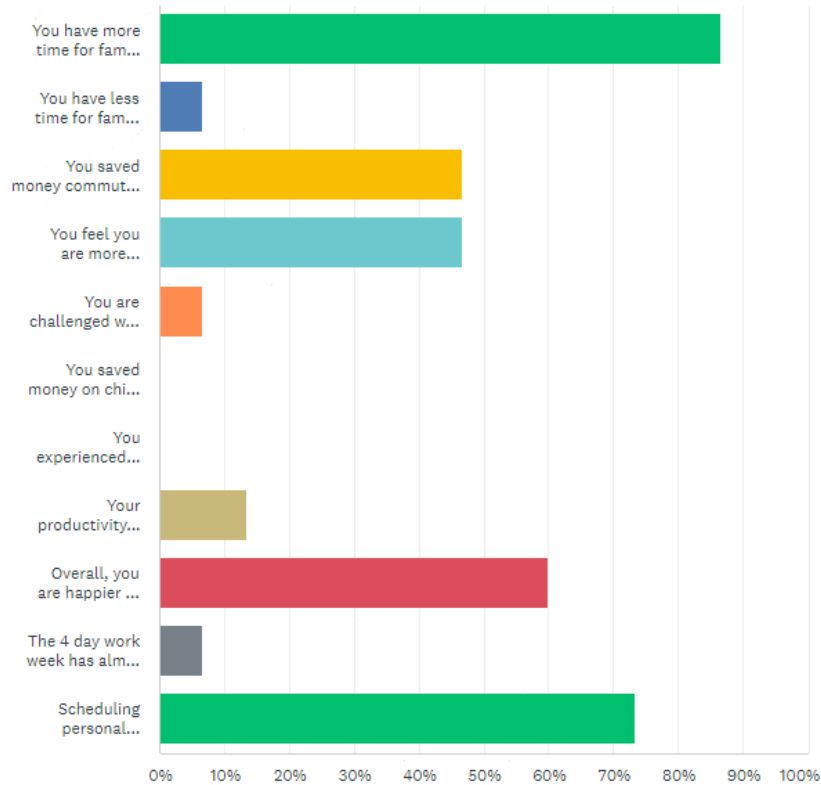


Customize

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How does the 4 day work week affect you personally? Check all that apply

Answered: 15 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ You have more time for family and other personal interests	86.67% 13
▼ You have less time for family and other interests	6.67% 1
▼ You saved money commuting to and from work	46.67% 7
▼ You feel you are more productive at your job	46.67% 7
▼ You are challenged with daily commutes after a long work day	6.67% 1
▼ You saved money on child care	0.00% 0
▼ You experienced difficulty finding child care for extended hours	0.00% 0
▼ Your productivity lags as the day goes on	13.33% 2
▼ Overall, you are happier and more satisfied	60.00% 9
▼ The 4 day work week has almost no effect on you personally	6.67% 1
▼ Scheduling personal appointments is less challenging	73.33% 11

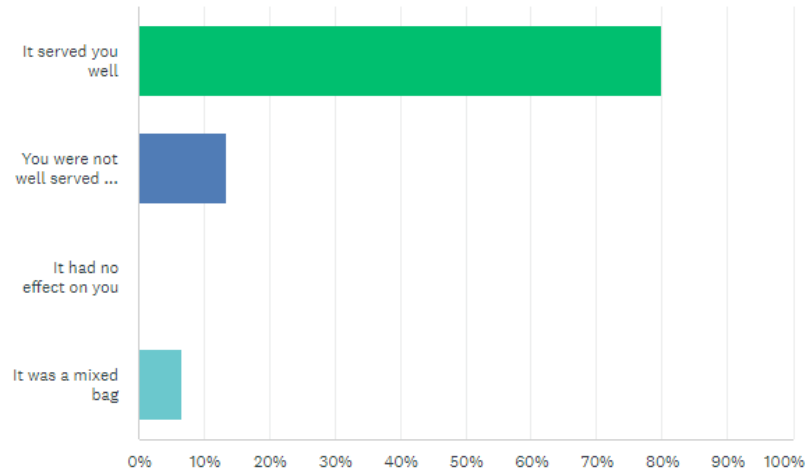
Total Respondents: 15

Q2

Customize Save as

What is your overall evaluation of how well the 4 day work week serves you?

Answered: 15 Skipped: 0

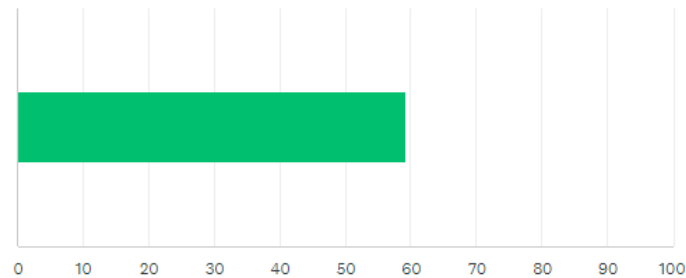


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
It served you well	80.00% 12
You were not well served by it	13.33% 2
It had no effect on you	0.00% 0
It was a mixed bag	6.67% 1
TOTAL	15

Q3

On a scale of 1-5, how satisfied are you with your ability to conduct METRO business with the 4 day work week?

Answered: 15 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES

AVERAGE NUMBER

TOTAL NUMBER

RESPONSES

Total Respondents: 15

Some employees entered a numeric value in the field as opposed to using the slider 1-5.

Cross Walk to convert answers to a 1-5 scale

1-20 = rating of 1

21-40 = rating 2

41-60 = rating 3

61-80 = rating 4

81-100 = rating 5

1. Rating of 1 – 1 respondent
2. Rating of 2 – 0 respondents
3. Rating of 3 – 1 respondent
4. Rating of 4 – 3 respondents
5. Rating of 5 – 10 respondents

Q4

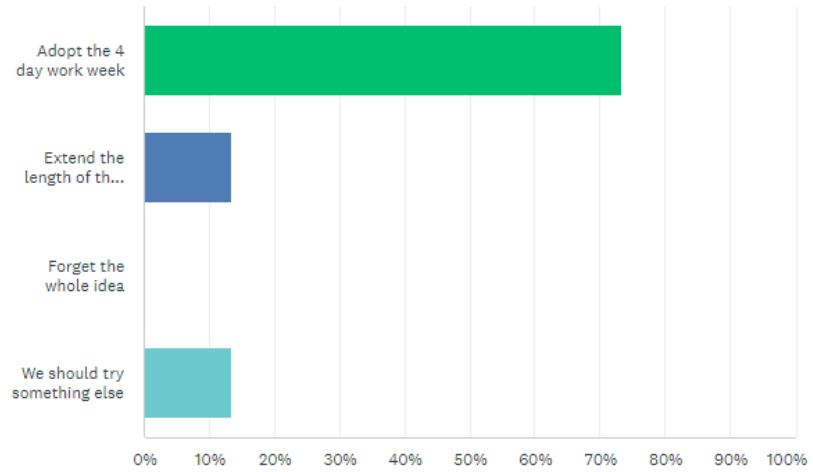


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What should we do with the 4 day work week?



Answered: 15 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Adopt the 4 day work week	73.33%	11
▼ Extend the length of the pilot program	13.33%	2
▼ Forget the whole idea	0.00%	0
▼ We should try something else	13.33%	2
TOTAL		15

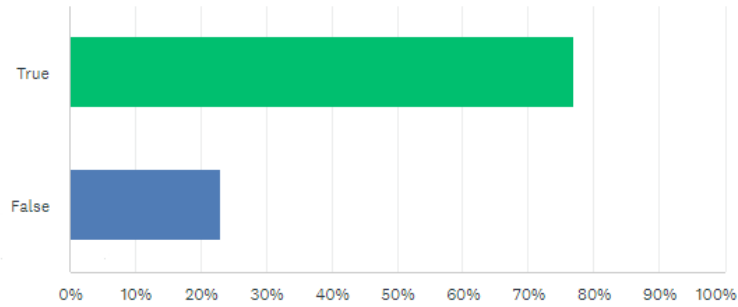
[Comments \(5\)](#)

Q5

 Customize  Save as



Employee morale has improved with our 4 day work week

Answered: 13 Skipped: 2



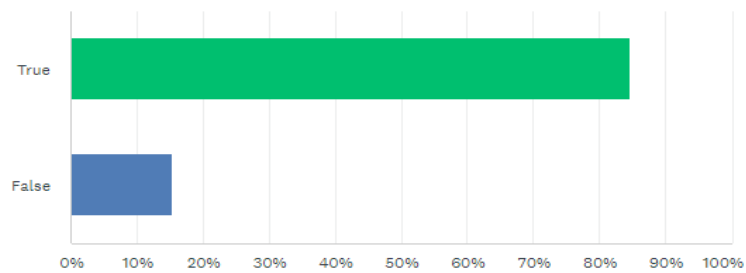
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
True	76.92% 10
False	23.08% 3
TOTAL	13

Q6

 Customize  Save as

Productivity has increased with our 4 day work week.

Answered: 13 Skipped: 2

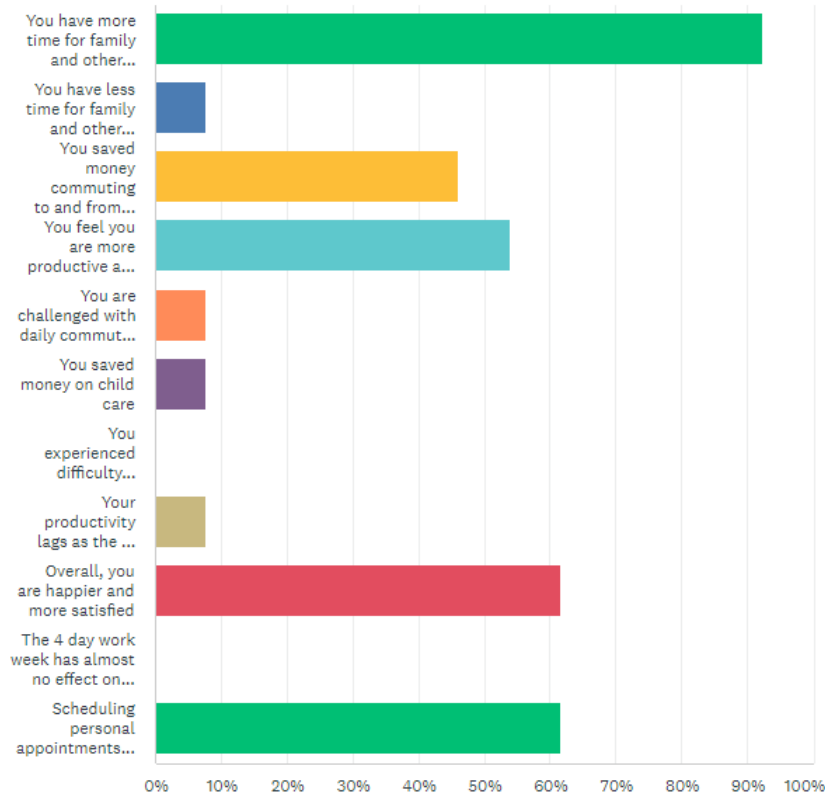


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
True	84.62% 11
False	15.38% 2
TOTAL	13



How does the 4 day work week affect you personally? Check all that apply

Answered: 13 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ You have more time for family and other personal interests	92.31% 12
▼ You have less time for family and other interests	7.69% 1
▼ You saved money commuting to and from work	46.15% 6
▼ You feel you are more productive at your job	53.85% 7
▼ You are challenged with daily commutes after a long work day	7.69% 1
▼ You saved money on child care	7.69% 1
▼ You experienced difficulty finding child care for extended hours	0.00% 0
▼ Your productivity lags as the day goes on	7.69% 1
▼ Overall, you are happier and more satisfied	61.54% 8
▼ The 4 day work week has almost no effect on you personally	0.00% 0
▼ Scheduling personal appointments is less challenging	61.54% 8
Total Respondents: 13	

Q2

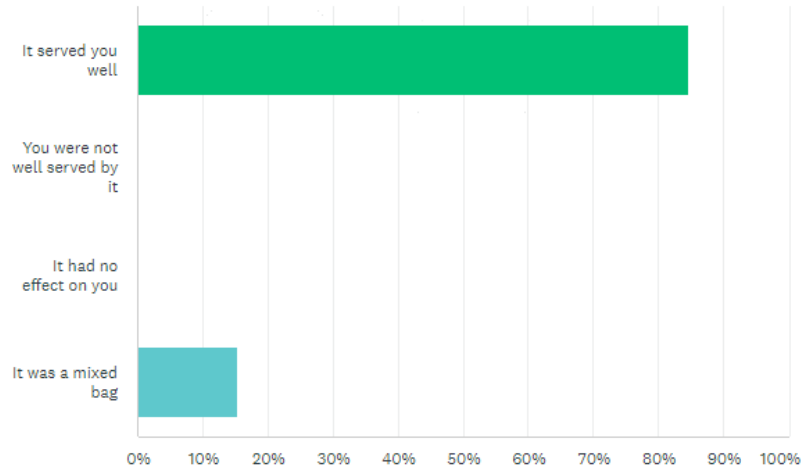


Customize

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What is your overall evaluation of how well the 4 day work week serves you?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▾ It served you well	84.62% 11
▾ You were not well served by it	0.00% 0
▾ It had no effect on you	0.00% 0
▾ It was a mixed bag	15.38% 2
TOTAL	13

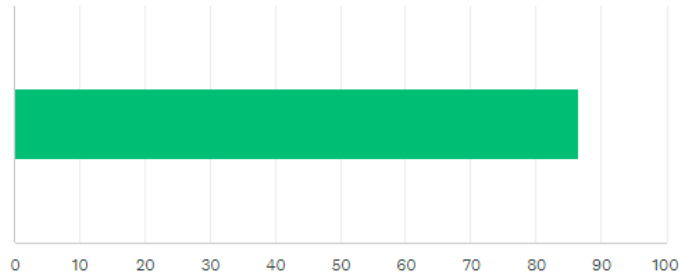
Q3

Customize

Save as ▼

On a scale of 1-5, how satisfied are you with your ability to conduct METRO business with the 4 day work week?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
Responses	87	1,126	13
Total Respondents: 13			

Some employees entered a numeric value in the field as opposed to using the slider 1-5.

Cross Walk to convert answers using a 1-5 scale to %

1-20% = rating of 1

21-40% = rating 2

41-60% = rating 3

61-80% = rating 4

81-100% = rating 5

1. Rating of 1 – 1 respondent

2. Rating of 2 – 0 respondent

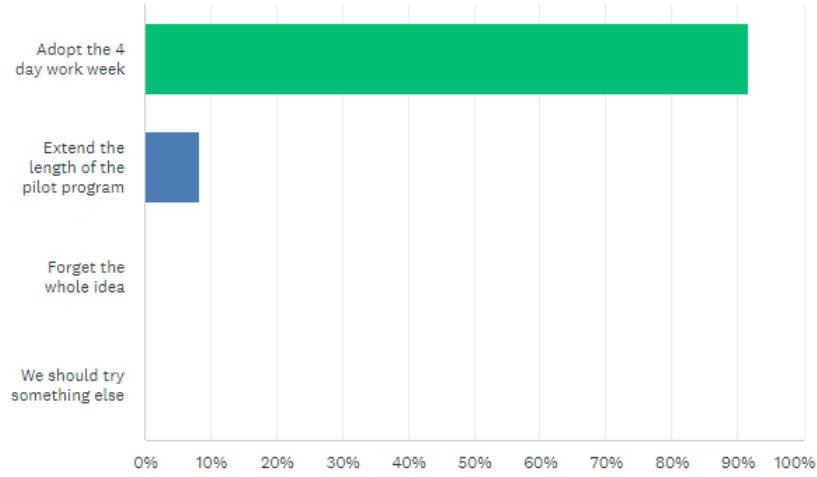
3. Rating of 3 – 0 respondent

4. Rating of 4 – 2 respondents

5. Rating of 5 – 10 respondents

What should we do with the 4 day work week?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Adopt the 4 day work week	91.67% 11
▼ Extend the length of the pilot program	8.33% 1
▼ Forget the whole idea	0.00% 0
▼ We should try something else	0.00% 0
TOTAL	12

Q5

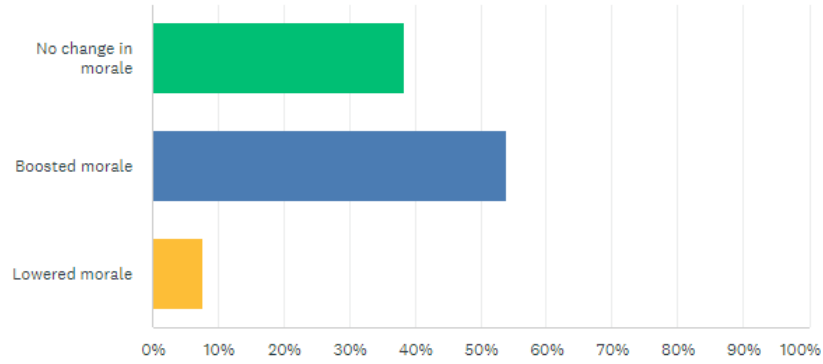


Customize

Save as ▾

How has the compressed work week impacted employee morale?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ No change in morale	38.46% 5
▼ Boosted morale	53.85% 7
▼ Lowered morale	7.69% 1
TOTAL	13

Q6

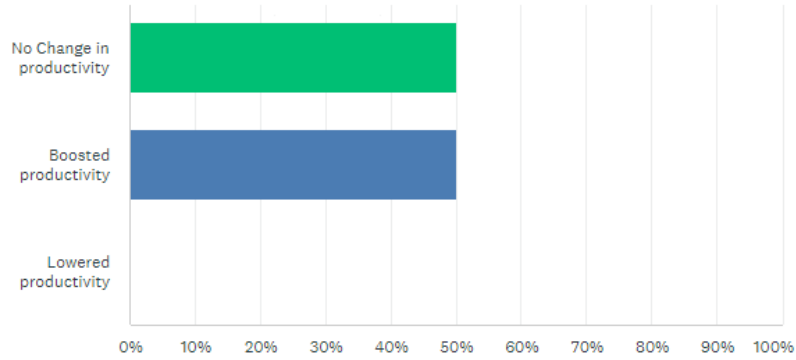


Customize

Save as ▾

How has the compressed work week impacted productivity?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES ▾	RESPONSES ▾
▾ No Change in productivity	50.00% 6
▾ Boosted productivity	50.00% 6
▾ Lowered productivity	0.00% 0
TOTAL	12

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM 5

DATE

June 12, 2024

SUBJECT

Collective Bargaining Agreement

PURPOSE

Review Tentative Agreement on terms of new Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with Amalgamated Transit Union Local 714.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

In October 2023, staff entered into contract negotiations with Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 714 for a new contract covering all union positions. Both sides exchanged lengthy proposals which were slowly pared down over the several meetings. The timeline for negotiations was significantly slower than in previous years in part due to difficulty scheduling bargaining sessions and to the distance between the two parties on compensation proposals. Additionally, in April of 2024 Metro changed lead negotiators from the Chief Transportation Officer to an attorney from Metro's legal counsel Drummond Woodsum, as a result of the departure of Metro's former executive director and the need for the CTO to assume the interim executive director role.

Staff believe that the agreements reached matches with Metro's goal retaining and attracting high caliber employees and positioning the organization for long-term sustainability.

The key tentative agreements for the agency are:

Term – Staff were successful in securing a three year (prospective) term for this agreement. Metro's new CBA will be effective from July 1, 2024 thru June 30, 2027. This is the maximum contract term allowed by Maine law. By moving the contract renewal to July, uncertainty around budgeting the first year of the CBA is effectively cut in half. In the past, staff would find themselves estimating a whole years' worth of union wages as most CBA's are approved after Metro's annual budget has already been approved. With a July renewal, staff will only have to estimate 6 months of wages and should be in better position for Metro's regular budget cycle.

Part Time Bus Operators – Staff were able to get part-time bus operators permanently added to the CBA. Current part time language in the CBA is very restrictive in how these employees can be used. The new language greatly improves the flexibility with which part-time bus operators can be used, with up to 72 hours of part-time work available per week.

Paid Family and Medical Leave Taxes – Maine’s new Paid Family and Medical Leave Program requires that employers pay a 1% payroll tax on wages to the State of Maine to fund the program for paid leave for employees. This tax can be paid entirely by the employer or split with the employee. For organizations that have collective bargaining agreements, in order for employees to pay half the tax, there must be agreement between both parties (Management and Union). Absent this agreement Metro would have been in a difficult negotiating position to try to add this language away from regular contract negotiations. This tax will start being collected in January 2025.

Restructuring on Mechanic Classifications – The approved revision to select Maintenance Department classifications makes Metro more competitive in the diesel mechanic market which has been a very difficult position to fill and retain quality employees. Additionally, Metro now has the ability to offer more qualified candidates a higher starting wage which has been a barrier to landing well-qualified mechanics. The new pay structure is simpler to administer than the current pay plan which has several stipends that must be added to regular rates. Lastly, a new classification of "Apprentice Mechanic" has been created which will offer Metro the ability to hire and develop less qualified individuals with strong mechanical aptitudes.

The estimated cost of this restructuring of wages is \$11,843 in the first year.

Mechanic Scale

	0-12 Months	13-24 months	25-36 months	36+ months
Apprentice Mechanic Graduate from an approved trade/vocational school	\$25.48	\$26.32	\$27.16	\$28.00
Mechanic I Meets minimum qualifications of mechanic position (includes state inspection license).	\$31.80	\$32.85	\$33.90	\$34.95
Mechanic II Meets minimum qualifications 5+ yrs diesel mechanic experience+ pass proficiency test	\$34.98	\$36.14	\$37.29	\$38.45
Technician 10+ yrs diesel mechanic experience (at least 4 yrs with Metro) + pass proficiency test, hold HVAC certifications	\$37.00	\$38.22	\$39.44	\$40.66

Delete sections:

5.6.1 ASE, 5.6.2 School Bus Stipend, 5.6.3 State inspection, 5.6.4 HVAC.

For mechanics, retro will be paid as a 3% increase on the 2023 wage rate. The new rates take effect upon execution.

General Wage Increase – Staff are satisfied with the general wage increase which is 3% in 2024 (retro-active to January 1, 2024), 2% on Jan 1, 2025, 2% on Jul 1, 2025, 3% on Jan 1, 2026, 2% on Jul 1, 2026 and 2% on Jan 1, 2027. By delaying half of raise until mid-year Metro reduces the expense of the increase in that budget year. This effectively makes the 2024 and 2025 increase equal to a 3% increases each year. However, there is a compounding effect that leads to higher wages long-term meaning that 2026 wages will net to be 10% higher than today’s wages.

The first year cost of the wage increase matches Metro’s budget of 3%. The out years will need to be budgeted to cover the wage growth over time.

Effective Date	Percentage Increase for Operators	Top Operator Hourly Rate
Upon Execution of agreement	3%	\$31.54
Jan 1 2025	2%	\$32.17
July 1 2025	2%	\$32.81
Jan 1 2026	3%	\$33.79
July 1 2026	2%	\$34.47
Jan 1 2027	2%	\$35.16

The following table summarizes each tentative agreement, justification for it, along with its fiscal impact on the 2024 budget.

Tentative Agreement	Description/Justification	2024 Budget Impact	
1	Move language to its own subsection	Move language regarding union business to its own section	n/a
2	Contract language clean-up	Various old language removed, “General Manager” updated to “Executive Director”. These changes are not substantive.	n/a
3	Remove obsolete language	Removes references to prior years.	n/a
4	Remove one-time inflationary payment	Removes old language	n/a
5	Part-time Bus Operators	Restrictions on use of part-time bus operators is greatly reduced.	Cost savings anticipated through reduction of overtime

6	Increase in Training Rate	Increases hourly stipend for employees conducting training from \$1.00/hr to \$2.00/hr.	\$1,000
7	Paid Family and Medical Leave Taxation	Union agrees to split the taxation with Metro when the tax becomes effective in 2025.	50% reduction in future tax expense.
8	Reduces the number of days notice management must provide the union of a schedule change.	Makes schedule changes easier for staff.	n/a
9	Change in how temporary bids are held	Makes temporary bids for bus operators simpler and faster.	n/a
10	Note that late reports are posted to the bottom of the spareboard	Codifies an existing practice	n/a
11	Change "Department Head" to "Dispatcher"	Updating contract language to reflect practice.	n/a
12	Revise to allow PTO to be taken in quarter hour increments	Provides more flexibility to employees in the way that they use their paid time off.	n/a
13	Delete old language	Language clean-up	n/a
14	Increase portion of uniform allowance that can be used for shoes.	Increases portion of uniform allowance that can be used for shoes/boots from \$50 to \$100. Total uniform allowance is not increased.	No impact
15	Payout of Sundry stipend	Sundry payment to be made to all employees in the same week in which uniform taxation is applied.	\$2,500
16	Delete old language	Language clean-up	n/a
17	Allow employees to convert 2 weeks of vacation to PTO time	Provides more flexibility in how employees can use their time off without adding additional paid time.	No impact

18	Change "General Manager" to "Executive Director"	Language clean-up	n/a
19	Add "Medical Professional Remote"	Allow remote doctor's visits as acceptable means to verify an illness (current CBA requires in office doctor's visit)	n/a
20	Changes to bereavement leave	Increase the bereavement leave from 3 to 5 days for step-family members.	Minimal
21	Increase tool allowance	Increase tool allowance for Mechanic/Technician classifications from \$600 to \$1,000	\$2,800
22	Term	Three years. July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2027	n/a
23	Change payout of perfect attendance bonus to second full week after quarter ends	Clarifies payout date. No change in perfect attendance benefit.	n/a
24	Change pronouns in contract to "employee"	Make contract language gender neutral	n/a
25	Correct the grammatical error	Change to the word "insure" to "ensure"	n/a
26	Add restriction from assigning bus operators to cover dispatch shifts	Protect bus operators from being assigned to work to cover an open shift in a different job classification	n/a
27	Remove reference to "non-union dispatchers"	Correct section to reflect that dispatcher is now a union position	n/a
28	Increase Team Leader pay	Increase Team Leader pay from \$0.80/hr to \$2.00/hr	\$2,496

FISCAL IMPACT

The 2024 total cost of this agreement is \$202,910

RECOMMENDATION

Approve tentative agreements with ATU 714. Recommend approval of Collective Bargaining Agreement to the Board of Directors.

CONTACT

Glenn Fenton
Chief Transportation Officer
(207) 517-0329
gfenton@gpmetro.org

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – June 7, 2024 Tentative Agreement with ATU 714

**Greater Portland Transit District and Local Union #714 of the Amalgamated Transit Union
Negotiations**

Tentative Agreement – June 7, 2024

A. Wages – Article 5.3

Effective Date	Percentage Increase for Operators	Top Operator Hourly Rate
Upon Execution of agreement	3%	\$31.54
Jan 1 2025	2%	\$32.17
July 1 2025	2%	\$32.81
Jan 1 2026	3%	\$33.79
July 1 2026	2%	\$34.47
Jan 1 2027	2%	\$35.16

Employees shall be paid retroactive wages at the rate established upon ratification for hours worked dating back to January 1, 2024.

Mechanic Scale

	0-12 Months	13-24 months	25-36 months	36+ months
Apprentice Mechanic Graduate from an approved trade/vocational school	\$25.48	\$26.32	\$27.16	\$28.00
Mechanic I Meets minimum qualifications of mechanic position (includes state inspection license).	\$31.80	\$32.85	\$33.90	\$34.95
Mechanic II Meets minimum qualifications 5+ yrs diesel mechanic experience+ pass proficiency test	\$34.98	\$36.14	\$37.29	\$38.45
Technician 10+ yrs diesel mechanic experience (at least 4 yrs with Metro)+ pass proficiency test, hold HVAC certifications	\$37.00	\$38.22	\$39.44	\$40.66
	91%	94%	97%	

Delete sections:

5.6.1 ASE, 5.6.2 School Bus Stipend, 5.6.3 State inspection, 5.6.4 HVAC.

For mechanics, retro will be paid as a 3% increase on the 2023 wage rate. The new rates take effect upon execution.

GPTD Initials: _____

ATU Initials: _____

The Union and the District shall agree on the proficiency test to be developed in order to move from Mechanic I to Mechanic II, and from Mechanic II to Technician. If, after six meetings, the parties are unable to agree to a proficiency test, either party may request neutral arbitration on the matter.

The Parties agree to the following contract language changes:

1. Article 1.2.3: Final sentence shall be moved to be its own subsection.
2. Article 3.12: Change “General Manager” to “Executive Director”.
3. Article 4.1, 4.2: Remove obsolete language referring to prior years.
4. Article 5.9: Remove section discussing one-time inflation relief payment.
5. Article 5.4.4: Part timers
 - a. District may employ up to 3 part-time operators.
 - b. No more than 2 part-timers working any day (except in cases where working more than 2 part-timers will avoid assignments).
 - c. Each part-timer can work up to three shifts per week.
 - d. Part-timers are scheduled prior to the spareboard going out and are assigned work that is in the most junior position on the spareboard. Part-timers shall be assigned work on a rotating basis.
 - e. Part-timers are not eligible for cover work or same day overtime.
 - f. Retired bus operators that become part-timers will be paid top rate, provided that they have worked for the District for at least 3 years.
 - g. Retired bus operators who apply for part-time positions shall be hired over other applicants.
 - h. Part-time operators that are hired without previously working for the District will be paid the first year bus operator rate. These operators will move through the wage progression provided they work at least 48 days each year.
 - i. Part-time operators shall be paid per

GPTD Initials: _____

ATU Initials: _____

diem and are not eligible for any contractual premiums or holiday pay.

6. Article 5.5: Increase rate for training new operators/mechanics from \$1.00 to \$2.00.
7. Paid Family and Medical Leave – New Article 5.10
Either party may reopen the leave provision(s) of this Agreement for the purpose of negotiating issues relating to the implementation of the Maine Paid Family Medical Leave Act (PFMLA). Upon written receipt of a reopener request, the Union and District negotiators shall meet within ten (10) days or at a mutually agreed date to negotiate. The parties agree that the District shall pay half of any payroll tax required pursuant to the PFMLA, and employees shall pay half of any payroll tax required pursuant to the PFMLA. Any agreement reached pursuant to this reopener provision shall be subject to ratification by the District and the Union and shall be attached to this Agreement.
8. Article 12.6: Change 11 to 7 calendar days.
9. Article 13.3.1: Temporary bids for absences expected to last more than thirty days will be conducted concurrently with the general bid.
10. Articles 14.1.2, 14.1.3: Remove these sections replace with “Early reports scheduled before 11 am shall be posted at the top of the spareboard in order by report time. Late reports scheduled 11 am or later shall be posted at the bottom of the spareboard.”
11. Article 15.2: Change “Department Head” to “Dispatcher”.
12. Article 25.4: Revise to allow PTO to be taken in quarter hour increments.
13. Article 26: Strike 26.3.1 from contract.
14. Article 26.3: Operators will receive an annual uniform allowance of \$250.00 which includes \$100.00 towards shoes.
15. Article 26.8: Sundry payment
 - a. \$250 allotment shall remain in place
 - b. Employee shall receive \$100 payout for sundry in the same pay period that uniform taxes are assessed.
 - c. Eliminate the \$100 sundry reimbursement
16. Article 27.1: Remove notes about previous year’s PTO allowances (2020/2021).
17. Article 27.9: Amend to allow bargaining unit members to convert two weeks’ vacation to PTO time, after an employee has been employed by Metro for 5 years.
18. Article 36.7: Change “General Manager” to “Executive Director.”

GPTD Initials: _____

ATU Initials: _____

19. Article 42.3: Amend to include for medical professional remote or in-person documented visit.
20. Article 44.1: Increase Stepfather, Stepmother, Stepbrother, Stepsister, and Stepchild from 3 days paid bereavement to 5 days.
21. Article 46.1: Increase tool/work boot allowance to \$1,000 for mechanics. Tool/work boot allowance remains current contract for all other employees.
22. Article 50.1: Change dates to July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2027.
23. Article 52.1: Change pay for perfect attendance to “second full payroll week” instead of second. Payout is default.
24. Article 51.1: Remove section; throughout contract, replace all gendered references to employees from masculine to term “employee.”
25. Article 53: Change “insure” to “ensure” in third paragraph.
26. Article 54: Add a bullet point: “Once the 3-week training period has expired, the District shall not utilize an operator acting as a dispatcher, if it would cause another operator to be assigned to work on their day off, unless it is the dispatcher-in-training’s normal day off.”
27. Article 54, third bullet point under “Compensation/Term:” Remove reference to “nonunion” dispatchers.
28. Appendix A(3): Increase Team Leader Stipend from \$0.80 per hour to \$2 per hour.

[Signatures on following page]

GPTD Initials: _____

ATU Initials: _____

The members of the negotiating teams for GPTD and the Local Union #714 of the ATU tentatively agree to the modifications to the existing collective bargaining agreement set forth in this document. These individuals also agree to advocate for the ratification of a successor collective bargaining agreement which consists of the collective bargaining agreement between the parties that expired on December 31, 2023, with the modification provided for herein.

Date of Tentative Agreement: _____

GPTD

Glenn Fenton
Interim Executive Director

ATU

Joe Thomas
Business Agent and President

Mike Frager
Committee Member

Jon Cail
Committee Member

Bill Jackson
Committee Member

GPTD Initials: _____

ATU Initials: _____



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

AGENDA ITEM 7

DATE

June 12, 2024

SUBJECT

South Portland Merger

PURPOSE

Discuss Metro’s proposal for South Portland to rejoin Metro as a member community.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

Staff are drafting a proposal outlining the terms under which South Portland could rejoin Metro as a member community for discussion at South Portland’s June 25, 2024 Council Workshop. The proposal addresses the principal questions/concerns identified by South Portland staff as items raised in discussion with South Portland City Councilors as well as other important elements that support Metro’s position that a merged system is better for all parties.

The four primary areas of interest raised by South Portland are; Metro Board representation, possible service improvements, current South Portland employee transition and long-term financial savings. Metro’s proposed positions on each of these items are outlined herein.

Board Representation

Metro’s Board representation by community is based on a combination of the amount of revenue service operated in each community and the population of the community (2020 census). Table 1 shows how Metro’s current Board representation aligns with the service and population metrics of the member communities.

Table 1

CURRENT METRO BOARD REPRESENTATION										
Municipality	Rev Hours	%	Population	%	Avg %	Board Seats	Seat Weight	Weighted Seats	Weighted %	Weighted vs. Avg %
Brunswick	2,770	3%	21,756	14%	8%	1	1	1	5%	-3%
Falmouth	10,361	10%	12,444	8%	9%	2	1	2	10%	1%
Freeport	2,270	2%	8,737	5%	4%	1	1	1	5%	1%
Gorham	4,280	4%	18,336	11%	8%	2	1	2	10%	2%
Portland	64,464	62%	68,408	43%	53%	5	2	10	50%	-3%
Westbrook	17,407	17%	20,400	13%	15%	3	1	3	15%	0%
Yarmouth	2,270	2%	8,990	6%	4%	1	1	1	5%	1%
Total	103,321	100%	159,486	100%	100%	15	8	20	100%	

Based on the South Portland’s population and existing service, it is recommended to offer South Portland four (4) seats on Metro’s Board of Directors. Table 2 shows how this would affect board representation on Metro’s Board.

Table 2

PROPOSED METRO BOARD REPRESENTATION										
Municipality	Rev Hours	%	Population	%	Avg %	Board Seats	Seat Weight	Weighted Seats	Weighted %	Weighted vs. Avg %
Brunswick	2,770	2%	21,756	12%	7%	1	1	1	4%	-3%
Falmouth	10,361	9%	12,444	7%	8%	2	1	2	8%	1%
Freeport	2,270	2%	8,737	5%	3%	1	1	1	4%	1%
Gorham	4,280	4%	18,336	10%	7%	2	1	2	8%	2%
Portland	64,464	53%	68,408	37%	45%	5	2	10	42%	-3%
South Portland	17,426	14%	26,498	14%	14%	4	1	4	17%	2%
Westbrook	17,407	14%	20,400	11%	13%	3	1	3	13%	0%
Yarmouth	2,270	2%	8,990	5%	3%	1	1	1	4%	1%
Total	121,248		185,569			19	9	24	100%	

Staff believes that this level of representation is appropriate and in line with how Metro has historically added other municipalities to its Board.

Should South Portland choose to join Metro, it would be advisable to start a broader discussion about the possibility of restructuring the Board of Directors since a Board of 19 individuals could be cumbersome to convene.

Employee Transition

Currently, South Portland employees 9 full-time bus operators, 2 part-time bus operators and 1 mechanic. All of these individuals would be offered the opportunity to join Metro in the event of a merger.

Staff have completed a compensation and benefit analysis comparing South Portland’s wages and benefits to Metro’s. The results of this analysis were different for every employee. All employees were determined to get an increase in total take home pay. Increases ranged from 4% to 27%.

Benefits analysis determined that Metro’s retirement contributions (employer match) exceeded that of South Portland for all but one employee. Insurance coverages and employee contributions were mixed in comparison with Metro’s. South Portland offers multiple plans so the comparison varies by plan selection and coverage type.

On June 13, 2024 Metro staff will be visiting South Portland Bus Service’s offices to meet directly with South Portland employees to answer individual questions and provide one on one support.

The last and most important factor to consider in transitioning South Portland employees to Metro is that of seniority. Initial meetings with Union leadership indicate that Metro’s Union (ATU 714) would be willing to allow South Portland operators the ability to retain their seniority as it

pertains to South Portland routes. This is an excellent way to help South Portland employees transfer to Metro with basically no negative impacts.

Staff's goal is to fully incorporate South Portland bus operators into Metro's union seniority list over the first 1-2 years after a merger. This would facilitate the combination of Metro and South Portland routes (interlines) to improve the customer experience and efficiency.

Service Enhancements

Metro staff have reviewed South Portland's existing routes and schedules as well as the Transit Together study recommendations for South Portland. There's an opportunity for improvement on all three existing routes as well as potential expansions and new services.

Staff have put together several conceptual service improvements. These service improvements were presented to South Portland's Transit Advisory Committee on May 20, 2024. An overview of these service changes will be included in the proposal.

Any formal action on changes to South Portland bus routes would need to go through Metro's normal public involvement process and be approved by South Portland prior to implementing. Details of potential service improvements can be found in Attachment A.

Budget/Long-term Savings

Metro has historically provided credits to communities that have piloted new routes. In some cases, these credits or offsets having extended for several years. The case for South Portland to receive a credit is different than Metro's previous credits, which were applied to communities with new bus service in most cases being piloted. South Portland has mature transit routes, transit staff and equipment that Metro would assume in the event of a merger. There are additional assets that would also be transferred in the event of a merger as well; like bus shelters, support vehicles and bus parts. It's for these reasons that staff recommend a permanent credit to South Portland for the service that Metro is already operating in South Portland on Metro Routes 3 and 5. This is essentially a continuation of Metro's current practice of paying for service in South Portland operated by Metro using state funding. In order to have equity, staff also recommend offsetting the cost of the South Portland's existing service in Portland.

The proposed exceptions to Metro's cost allocation model are intended to be indefinite. However, any service changes that are approved by the communities would be subject to the current cost allocation model. Metro has several conceptual route interlines and service enhancements that will be presented to South Portland and Portland in the event of a merger. These service changes are designed to reduce duplication of services and improve system connectivity.

The under the proposed South Portland credit model, South Portland stands to save approximately, \$75k in year one (see Table 3).

Table 3

Municipality	FY 2023	FY 2024				Change	
		Debt Service	Fixed	Variable	Total	%	\$
Brunswick	\$ 87,235	\$ 7,567	\$ 15,392	\$ 45,137	\$ 68,096	-22%	\$ (19,139)
Falmouth	\$ 228,596	\$ 11,081	\$ 22,539	\$ 170,074	\$ 203,695	-11%	\$ (24,901)
Freeport	\$ 87,235	\$ 7,567	\$ 15,392	\$ 45,137	\$ 68,096	-22%	\$ (19,139)
Gorham	\$ -		\$ 29,020	\$ 85,353	\$ 114,373	100%	\$ 114,373
Portland	\$ 3,176,567	\$ 221,557	\$ 450,653	\$ 1,655,955	\$ 2,328,165	-27%	\$ (848,402)
South Portland	\$ -		\$ 118,155	\$ 607,094	\$ 725,249	100%	\$ 725,249
Westbrook	\$ 832,703	\$ 58,025	\$ 118,025	\$ 556,813	\$ 732,864	-12%	\$ (99,839)
Yarmouth	\$ 87,235	\$ 7,567	\$ 15,392	\$ 45,137	\$ 68,096	-22%	\$ (19,139)
Annual Total	\$ 4,499,571	\$ 313,365	\$ 784,569	\$ 3,210,700	\$ 4,308,633	-4%	\$ (190,938)

Other Credits

As part of a merger, South Portland would transfer 5 buses to Metro. After depreciating the buses from purchase date to current the remaining local interest in the buses is \$251,256. Staff recommend that South Portland receive a one-time credit for this residual value. This credit would be applied in Metro’s budget year 2025.

If South Portland’s City Council indicates an interest in joining Metro, staff would need to complete a more exhaustive analysis of what other assets, equipment and bus parts should be transferred and what credit, if any, South Portland should be provided for those additional items. We don’t expect this to be a material matter in the merger.

Debt Service

Metro currently has \$1,210,350 in bond debt, used to pay for the local portion of large capital expenses. When new communities join Metro previous debt that Metro carries is withheld from the cost allocation model so that new communities only pay for debt service for which they had Board representation to approve. The same policy is proposed for the inclusion of South Portland into Metro. South Portland would be held harmless from paying for existing debt and would only be responsible for new debt incurred after they join Metro.

Projection

Staff projected a three year look ahead of prospective service, revenue and expenses with South Portland as a Metro member community. This projection is based on a number of assumptions about service changes. Specifically, it assumes that the current American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) service improvements are made permanent in 2026. There are also assumptions made about operating cost increases and modest growth in federal funding. See the estimated local contributions by municipality in Table 4.

Table 4

Municipality	2024 (current)	2024 (proposed)	2025	2026	2027
Brunswick	\$ 93,440	\$ 68,096	\$ 151,800	\$158,107	\$162,064
Falmouth	\$ 240,810	\$ 203,695	\$ 222,533	\$589,404	\$609,545
Freeport	\$ 93,440	\$ 68,096	\$ 151,800	\$158,107	\$162,064
Gorham	\$ 170,139	\$ 114,373	\$ 121,491	\$164,642	\$182,906
Portland	\$ 3,026,189	\$ 2,328,165	\$ 2,761,465	\$3,354,162	\$3,982,500
South Portland	\$ -	\$ 725,249	\$ 724,062	\$634,956	\$684,691
Westbrook	\$ 927,212	\$ 732,864	\$ 929,640	\$802,712	\$848,127
Yarmouth	\$ 93,440	\$ 68,096	\$ 151,800	\$158,107	\$162,064
Annual Total	\$ 4,644,670	\$ 4,308,633	\$ 5,214,591	\$6,020,197	\$6,793,961

Capital Improvement Plan

Metro would need 5 additional buses in order to operate South Portland’s current bus service. However, staff would recommend that 7 buses be transferred. This would allow Metro to replace two 2011 Gillig buses that are planned to be retired in 2025 with two 2014 Gillig buses from South Portland’s fleet. Removing these buses from the Metro’s 2025 CIP budget would reduce the 2025 CIP by \$1,212,927 including \$121,293 in local match (bond debt).

Increasing Metro’s fleet size will necessitate a revision to Metro’s fleet replacement plan and CIP in future years to accommodate on-time replacement of additional buses. The larger fleet will require more capital funding to be programmed in future years.

One-time Costs of Merging

There are some expenses that are associated with adding South Portland’s existing operation to Metro’s. These include:

- Marketing/Communicating the merger to customers
- Rebranding buses
- Uniforms for South Portland employees
- Bus stop sign replacement
- Revising maps/schedules
- Training
- Merging on bus technologies

Most of these expenses would occur in the first year of a merger. Staff have discussed the possibility of requesting additional state funding to cover these costs. DOT staff have indicated that the DOT is supportive of a merger and could assist with transition costs. Assuming the merger proceeds Metro staff would create a more detailed estimate and meet with DOT staff to submit a formal request to fund.

ADDITIONAL PROPOSAL ELEMENTS

Passenger Benefits – The proposal will outline the benefits to current Metro and South Portland riders of a unified transit system. This will include; improved simplicity, more direct service, coordinated planning and scheduling and possible zero cost service enhancements through the reduction of redundant services.

Local Control – Staff will include in the proposal an in-depth explanation on how service changes are proposed, vetted and ultimately approved. This will include referencing how Metro’s current Title VI Policy prohibit major service changes without a documented public involvement process.

Sustainability Initiatives – Metro’s proposal will highlight the steps Metro has taken to meet the Board’s goal of having 100% a zero-emissions bus fleet by 2040.

Strategic Partnerships – This will include several examples of programs and services that were launched in partnership with local schools and universities that helped increase service and grow ridership. Additionally, Metro will note opportunities in South Portland for similar programs.

TIF Districts – Metro will point out the advantages of using Tax Increment Financing (TID) for transit expansion.

Reduction in Workload for South Portland Staff – Metro will identify the multiple city departments that currently support the bus service operation.

OPEN ITEMS

Regional Federal Funding Considerations

The current version of the PACTS Policy for Suballocating Regional Transit Funding uses four key metrics for allocating federal 5307 grant funding to PACTS member transit agencies. The metrics are; vehicle revenue hours, ridership, low income population near transit stops and population and jobs near transit stops.

Due to overlap in service area between Metro and South Portland Bus Service, the credit for accessing low income populations and population and jobs is currently counted for both agencies. In a merger scenario, these metrics would only be counted once for Metro. The result of this is that Metro could stand to receive less federal funding than the sum of Metro’s and South Portland’s current funding if South Portland joins Metro.

This presents an obvious issue when merging two transit providers is disincentivized. Staff have raised this issue with GPCOG staff and plan to further address it with the Transit Taskforce that is responsible for this policy.

Exit Clause

The ability for South Portland to leave Metro easily should they be unsatisfied with Metro’s performance was raised at South Portland’s Transit Advisory Committee Meeting. Although this

has not been raised as a concern on the South Portland City Council as of yet, staff have put some consideration into this issue.

Options for South Portland to leave Metro:

1. Metro operates South Portland's service as a contractor. In this scenario, Metro could take possession but not ownership of South Portland's buses and arrange a per hour rate for Metro to operate South Portland's routes. South Portland employees would become Metro employees but could return to South Portland should they decide not to join Metro.

In this scenario South Portland would continue to be a direct recipient of FTA funds. They would need to monitor Metro and be responsible to the FTA for reporting on use of funds and maintenance of federally funded assets.

There would be little or no opportunity to interline routes or gain efficiencies with the service. In this model, it wouldn't make sense for South Portland to have Metro Board representation as a voting member as they would not technically be a Metro member community.

2. Metro manages South Portland's bus service while using Metro staff to support the operation. This is essentially the current arrangement where Metro is providing management services to South Portland with the addition of using Metro operations to back up South Portland's service.

In this scenario the current South Portland employees remain employees of South Portland. South Portland must meet all FTA reporting responsibilities and gains none of the efficiencies in-house related to supporting its bus service operation. In this scenario service improvements by combining routes are not possible.

This scenario offers South Portland little insight into what it is like to be a Metro member community.

3. South Portland joins Metro with an exit clause. This type of arrangement would allow South Portland to exit Metro after a prescribed amount of time. Staff would recommend not longer than two years. Metro's legal counsel would need to advise on how this type of arrangement might look.

In this arrangement Metro is able to demonstrate all of the benefits of joining Metro. There is a question about whether it would be advisable to make service enhancements in South Portland during this period that involve interlining with Metro routes as this could be difficult to undo should South Portland exercise its exit clause rights.

Staff don't recommend offering any special exit clause to South Portland due to the complications it causes and the way that it limits the opportunities for service improvements. All communities

that are members of Metro have the ability to leave Metro with only the requirement to pay for the community's portion of any debt that Metro incurred during its membership to Metro.

There would likely need to be a guarantee to return fleet and equipment in the event that South Portland chose to leave Metro. Employees returning to South Portland would be at their own discretion. Metro's collective bargaining agreement doesn't allow Metro to layoff operators outside of regular seniority rules, although another arrangement could be discussed with union leadership.

FTA Asset Transfer

Metro and South Portland staff have both spoken to FTA staff (separately) about the possibility of a merger and what that might mean for transferring assets and federal interest. FTA staff have indicated that this is not an uncommon request and that they are happy to help facilitate it.

Should the South Portland City Council express interest in a merger, Metro and South Portland staff would meet jointly with FTA staff to work out the details on what step would need to be taken in order for South Portland Bus Service to merge with Metro.

FISCAL IMPACT

PRIOR COMMITTEE REVIEW

RECOMMENDATION

This item is for input and discussion.

CONTACT

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ATTACHMENTS