Agenda Item 9-A  
Action Item

To: Chairman Skinner and the VRE Operations Board  
From: Rich Dalton  
Date: February 21, 2020  
Re: Authorization to Issue a General Planning Consulting Task Order for FY 2020 National Transit Database Data Collection  

Recommendation:

The VRE Operations Board is asked to authorize the Acting Chief Executive Officer to issue a General Planning Consulting (GPC) Services Task Order to Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) for National Transit Database (NTD) ridership data collection for FY 2020 in the amount of $152,405, plus a 10 percent contingency of $15,240, for a total amount not to exceed $167,645.

Summary:

As a recipient of federal formula funding through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), VRE is required to report passenger trips, passenger miles and other performance data to the NTD. VRE does not collect 100 percent boarding and alighting counts of passenger trips. Therefore, per NTD requirements, VRE must use a sampling or survey method to estimate passenger trips and passenger miles for reporting, which requires annual counts of riders on each revenue train. VRE’s GPC contractor will conduct boarding and alighting counts under this task order in support of VRE’s NTD reporting.

Background:

The FTA mandates that transit service data, including Unlinked Passenger Trips (UPT) and Passenger Miles Traveled (PMT), be collected and recorded daily so that the data is 100 percent accurate. The FTA does not generally allow agencies to estimate this data. Because VRE is an ungated or open system, it is not currently possible to count 100 percent of the
passengers riding VRE each day. The FTA recognizes the increased burden of meeting the 100 percent count requirement under this situation. To assist reporters who would find conducting 100 percent counts burdensome, transit agencies may estimate UPT and PMT through sampling. VRE uses a custom sampling plan to collect this data. A qualified statistician has certified that VRE’s sampling procedure meets FTA requirements for statistical precision and accuracy.

VRE conducts an annual count of riders boarding and alighting each train as part of its sampling procedure. The last NTD boarding and alighting survey was conducted in Spring 2019. This Task Order is for the FY2020 data collection. Onboard counts of VRE riders will be conducted between March and June 2020.

VHB is VRE’s GPC contractor and has performed this survey for the past three years. VHB’s statistician has developed and certified the VRE survey methodology. The Scope of Services for this Task Order includes: onboard collection of boardings and alightings for each VRE revenue train; compilation of the data by train to determine boarding and alighting patterns by station; statistical analysis of the data to ensure it meets NTD requirements for precision, accuracy and certification by a professional statistician; and documentation of the survey results in a technical memo. The boarding and alighting patterns are then used in the upcoming fiscal year to estimate VRE’s UPT and PMT for NTD reporting.

**Fiscal Impact:**

The FY 2020 operating budget for ‘Project Development – Consulting and Professional Services’ includes sufficient funding for this activity.
Virginia Railway Express
Operations Board

Resolution
9A-02-2020

Authorization to Issue a General Planning Consulting Task Order for FY 2020 National Transit Database Data Collection

WHEREAS, as a recipient of Federal formula funding through the Federal Transit Administration, VRE is required to report passenger trips, passenger miles and other performance data to the National Transit Database on an annual basis; and,

WHEREAS, to estimate passenger trips and passenger miles, VRE uses a sampling method, approved by the Federal Transit Administration, that requires an annual count of rider boardings and alightings on all revenue trains in the spring of each year; and,

WHEREAS, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., VRE’s General Planning Consultant, has the qualifications to collect this data and has presented an acceptable proposal to perform said services;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the VRE Operations Board does hereby authorize the Acting Chief Executive Officer to issue a General Planning Consulting Services Task Order to Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. for National Transit Database ridership data collection for FY2020 in the amount of $152,405, plus a 10 percent contingency of $15,240, for a total amount not to exceed $167,645.

Approved this 21st day of February 2020

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Gary Skinner
Chairman

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Jeanine Lawson
Secretary