

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS
DIVISION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES AND CARRIERS
89 JEFFERSON BOULEVARD
WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND 02888

In re: A&R Marine Corp. d/b/a/Prudence & Bay Islands Transport
894 Neck Farm Road
Prudence Island, RI 02872

Docket No. 24 MC 126

Order

WHEREAS: On May 20, 2024, A&R Marine Corp. (“A&R”) filed with the Division of Public Utilities and Carriers (“Division”) a proposal¹ to alter its operating schedule for the ferryboat services it offers between the Town of Bristol and Prudence Island, in the Town of Portsmouth, under its Division-issued Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN No. W-1177). The filing indicated A&R requested an July 1, 2024 effective date for the new schedule, if approved.

WHEREAS: The carrier explained its rationale for the proposed schedule change thusly:

“Since the schedule changes made in 2018, we have been compiling ridership data and monitoring customer preferences and based on this would like to propose some changes. Over the last several years, we have seen the high season extend further into the spring and fall and would like to change our Summer Schedule to include June through September. After observing the popularity of ferries, we would like to replace the summer’s 6:45/7:30pm Sunday late run with a more favorable 11:30am/12:15pm mid-day run. We would also like to add a specific July 4th holiday schedule to accommodate the Bristol Parade travel restrictions. The identical Spring and Fall Schedules would be April through May and October through November. On these schedules, we would like to add a Tuesday 1:30/2:30pm mid-day run as well as a Sunday 11:30am/12:15pm mid-day run. The winter schedule will remain as December through March with no changes made. With these and the other minor time adjustments made to simplify the schedules included in the attached files, we hope to provide better service to the residents and visitors of Prudence Island.”

¹ A copy of the proposed schedule is attached to this order as “Appendix 1.”

WHEREAS: Soon after the filing, the Division contacted A&R regarding the process the Division intended to undertake in vetting the schedule proposal. Indeed, the Division required that A&R post a notice of the instant filing – and the actual changes in the proposed schedule – on the ferry boat itself and at the company’s ticket booths in Bristol and on Prudence Island. That notice (a copy of which is contained in the instant docket folder) also was required to provide an invitation for riders/ratepayers to review the proposed changes and provide the Division with any comment within a 30-day window ending on June 24, 2024.

WHEREAS: At the close of that 30-day comment period, the Division had received a total of five (5) written comments from purported island residents and ferry passengers. Three (3) of the comments centered around a desire to maintain the late-Sunday ferry runs, one (1) was a “neutral” on the whole, and one (1) was fully supportive of the proposed changes. One of the comments also questioned the sufficiency of a 15-minute loading period.

WHEREAS: The Division compiled the five (5) comments and forwarded them without identifying any of the individual commenters to A&R for response. A&R reiterated that it felt the proposed schedule – including the revisions for Saturdays and Sundays – better served the overall population of travelers and supplemented its response with ridership data tables. Moreover, A&R indicated that its experience in running the ferry suggests a 15-minute loading period is sufficient.

WHEREAS: The Division has reviewed the proposed schedule changes and finds the schedule and the rationale of the carrier to be reasonable.

Accordingly,

It is Ordered (25085):

That the Division approves the schedule changes as filed in Appendix 1 to this Order. A&R Marine Corp. shall be authorized to utilize and adhere strictly to the approved schedule beginning on July 3, 2024.

DATED AND EFFECTIVE AT WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND, THIS 2nd DAY
OF JULY, 2024.



Anthony Manni
Deputy Administrator²

² Normally, the Administrator of the Division would approve and sign Orders such as this Order. In her absence, and pursuant to the authority granted by R.I. Gen. Laws §§ 42-20-3 and 42-20-5, Deputy Administrator Manni has been designated and authorized by the Administrator to execute the instant Order issued by the Division.