

Lummi Island Ferry Advisory Committee (LIFAC) Meeting

October 15, 2018 at 6:30 pm

Lummi Island Fire Hall, Lummi Island, WA

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chairman Cris Colburn called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

ROLL CALL

Present: Charles Bailey, Rhayma Blake, Cris Colburn, Jim Dickinson, Patricia Dunn, Nancy Ging

Also in Attendance: Rich Hudson-Senior Master; Lummi Island residents: Bill Fox, Bill Lee, Joan Moye

FLAG SALUTE

OPEN SESSION

Bill Lee – Thanked Whatcom County Public Works and the ferry crew for an exceptional job handling dry dock. Dunn added that the pre-dry dock letter from Jon Hutchings and Hudson was exceptionally well written and set clear expectations for the community.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

7/11/18 Meeting – Bailey moved and Dickinson seconded a motion for approval. The motion carried.

LIFAC INTERNAL BUSINESS

1. **Seating of new off-island member** - Nancy Ging was welcomed back on the committee, now filling one of the off-island positions. Bailey moved and Dunn seconded a motion to nominate Ging as chairman of the committee. The motion carried unanimously.
2. **Announcement of on-island vacancy.** It was clarified that the open position could be filled either by an off-islander or someone living or owning property on the island. Colburn, Dickinson, and Bailey have been actively reaching out to potential members. Dunn will post the open position on Nextdoor Lummi Island.

OLD BUSINESS

Update on Operations, Rich Hudson, Senior Master

1. **Dry-Dock** – Hudson noted that all 38 items in the dry dock contract were professionally and successfully completed by Foss Shipyards. The update of the electrical system was probably the most significant update, since much of the system was original from 1962. The steering was upgraded from analog to digital. Bill Fox indicated he would request the vessel conditions report be posted online. The cost of terminal repairs was \$375,000 and vessel repairs \$581,000, both classified as maintenance. This was the single largest update ever on the vessel and Hudson suggested these upgrades should allow the Whatcom Chief to operate successfully for the next 8 years until a replacement vessel is available. Future dry dock expenses should be more reasonable. The 2019 budget allocates \$550,000 for design of the future vessel with another \$100,000 allocated in 2020.
2. **Vessel Condition** - Hudson reassured LIFAC that he regularly inspects the vessel for potential problems that need to be addressed, with particular attention to hull thickness. Dickinson inquired about the bridge seat and was told it is scheduled for replacement in 2020.
3. **Crew Training** - Bailey enquired about crew training in the event of a major accident in mid-channel. Hudson said the crew trains every Sunday night and feels confident they can follow

the correct procedures with excellent response time. The 6 void spaces in the ferry and its pumps should protect the vessel even if it took on water and lost electricity. Hudson's greatest concern would be a fire in the engine room, and the new electrical system now minimizes that concern.

4. **Public Works Management Update** - Whatcom Public Works has posted Rob Ney's old position to be filled. The position is described as an asset manager who would act as National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) manager, and storm water manager. Hudson will continue to act as ferry manager. Hopefully, this person would be the one to contract for the \$550,000 in design work in 2019. Dunn suggested the position should also require experience in grant management and that the Transit Asset Management program (TAM) might be a good resource. Hudson reassured LIFAC that Roland Middleton was the grant person in the meantime. Dickinson suggested that Public Works be a member of the Passenger Vessel Association (PVA) in order to access additional resources.
5. **Replacement Vessel Design** - Dickinson voiced concerns over the current recommendation for hybrid propulsion. Ging wondered if LIFAC should be involved in vessel design.
6. **Transportation Improvement Project (TIP)**
 - a. Replacement of the Vessel and Terminal Modifications
 - b. Ferry Terminal Structural Repair Project (sandblasting, etc.) - \$650,000 allocated in 2019
 - c. LI Breakwater Replacement Project - \$1.75 million in 2019 (\$539,000 in local funds). Permits might delay this due to the need for rock socketing. Dunn cited other breakwater projects with expensive issues. Dickinson asked to see the design.
 - d. Relocation of the Gooseberry Point Terminal - \$250,000 allocated in 2019, and more, all for design and the environmental impact study. There is no current movement on property acquisition.
7. **New Ferry Position** - Currently there are 3 masters (7 day rotations), 3 pursers (6 day), 3 deckhands (5 day), and 2 relief (union, but no schedule). With Hudson taking on more administrative responsibilities, Public Works is seeking a third relief position at an expected cost increase of \$40,000/year. Hoekstra and Dabney are working to acquire their captains license.

NEW BUSINESS

1. **2019 LIFAC Work Plan Development Discussion** – Colburn suggested we review the annual budget for 2017 and 2018. Hudson will ask Randy Rydel to our next meeting. Colburn also suggested a regular reporting cycle be established concerning ferry traffic and analysis. Hudson said there will be no further traffic studies in 2018, but automating ferry ridership counts will be addressed in 2019. Dunn has a contact who might be useful in ridership technology. Ging led a review of the document establishing LIFAC. Establishing relationships with state legislators to pave the way for funding requests was suggested. Dunn said lobbying regulation awareness should be part of that effort. Dickinson suggests increasing relationships with other county ferry districts.
2. **Next Meeting** – Blake moved and Bailey seconded a motion to meet next in Bellingham on November 14, 2018 at 6:00 pm. The motion carried. Hudson will reserve the meeting room.

ADJOURN – The meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.