



Washington State Transportation Commission

Friday Harbor Meeting Summary
September 19, 2017

Chairman Jerry Litt called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. He then asked Commissioners and staff to introduce themselves.

COMMISSION BUSINESS

Action: Commissioner Tortorelli moved and Commissioner Jennings seconded the motion approving the amended July 25 & 26, 2017, meeting summary. The motion was approved unanimously.

Debbie Young, Commissioner, WSTC and Carl See, Senior Financial Analyst, WSTC presented on three recommendations for One Regional Card for All (ORCA) fare structure changes as the ORCA Joint Board develops the next generation ORCA system. ORCA's Regional Fare Forum, including Commissioner Young, previously agreed to these recommendations by consensus.

Action: Commissioner Young moved and Commissioner Serebrin seconded the motion approving Resolution 732, expressing the Commission's support for the ORCA Regional Fare Forum recommendations. The motion was approved unanimously.

Following Commission action on Resolution 732, Hester Serebrin, Commissioner, WSTC, noted support for continued consideration of fare capping for benefits to low-income

Reema Griffith, Executive Director, WSTC noted proposal for SR 507 naming resolution scheduled for October 2017 Commission meeting

SUMMER SERVICE DISRUPTIONS AND CHALLENGES

Kevin Ranker, Senator, Washington State Senate, discussion on the state of disrepair the Washington State Ferries is in and the continued problems that plagued the San Juan Islands this past summer.

- Timing of summer interrupted service was worst case scenario
- Assessing economic impacts with Chamber – about 73% of businesses impacted in San Juan County. Assessing the dollar value of that impact now
- Reservation system does not work in times of crisis
- Seeks additional authority for Commission regarding ferries – see below

- 20% of runs cancelled is the Washington State Ferries route performance metric instead of a metric addressing the percent of total route capacity. So, capacity lost on runs being temporarily serviced with a smaller boat (less vehicle capacity) is not factoring into performance considerations.
- The requested preservation & maintenance amounts in Governor Budget greatly below necessary amounts. Woefully inadequate – \$99 million needed vs. \$9.7 million provided in the Governor’s budget.
- Need better communication strategy about the interruptions – media did not help
- Should use capacity reduced, not runs cancelled as metric
- Fix reservation system for crisis situations
- Seek increased Washington State Ferries (WSF) oversight role by the Commission

Commissioner Young are there steps we can take now.

Kevin Ranker, is not sure what type of oversight by Commission would be helpful yet, but wants to have that conversation with other Senators as well. Not hammer oversight, but oversight as advocate for WSDOT (such as for including necessary funding in the Governor’s budget).

Roger Millar, Secretary WSDOT, notes that the Governor’s budget must balance – needs to match the revenue projection. So, cannot address the full preservation and maintenance backlog, just as for bridges, etc. With practical design, state of good repair, safety, and then capital projects is new priority order instead of capital projects as in the past.

Commissioner Litt notes that working to ensure planning reflects this order of priorities as well.

Shiv Batra Commissioner, WSTC, also a matter of equity for ferries vs. other transportation infrastructure. Ferries getting less of all portions of the budget relative to other infrastructure. So, an equity issue for residents of the islands (particularly in San Juan Islands without state roads).

Sen. Ranker, the return for state revenues for residents of San Juan Islands is the lowest (Capron funds does not adequately address this). Regarding Mr. Millar’s comments, Sen. Ranker would like prioritization to include categories for only ferry served communities (San Juan Islands, Vashon) to ensure adequate services.

Commissioner Young, with \$37 million maintenance backlog for one boat, when does those maintenance costs trigger an investment in a new boat? Ms. Scarton, a huge problem, but reality is we need to do both.

Amy Scarton, Assistant Secretary, Washington State Ferries, WSDOT, addressed three major points:

1. Overall, an effective and safe system
 2. A tough summer
 3. Need to address issues
- Ridership is up in 2017 from 2016, while reliability is up in regards to trips missed, with a slight dip in August (still about 97%)

- Customer satisfaction is up per FROG survey as well, with #1 concern being parking
- This summer was very tough. Ridership doubles in summer with 18% increase in service time. No additional boats, so use 19 of 22 boats with two in regular maintenance. So, 1 service relief vessel. Transit service standard is 20% of fleet as service relief, so well below that
- Identified the numerous service disruptions that occurred this summer, including a catastrophic crankshaft failure, engine problems, tangled crab pot lines, and a failed generator. In addition, a boat working on half power on Seattle-Bremerton route
- Not all problems specific to the San Juan Islands, but recognized the impacts in San Juan Islands are felt more distinctly with the economic lifeline reliance on ferries
- Making public the long used summer service contingency plan so WSF can have input, and to demonstrate that WSF does work to address service disruptions with a plan.
 - For example, with no service relief vessel, provides plan for how changes are prioritized, including:
 - Cost for moving the boat and crews
 - Community impacts
 - Ability for boat to fit
 - Overall, address system-wide impacts when making the decisions
- In San Juan Islands, service disruptions results by month included:
 - In July: decline in vehicles, increase in passengers
 - In August: decline in vehicles and passengers
 - Anacortes to Sidney route: 25% decline in ridership, but with 50% decline in service – were managing well
- Overall, state lost about ½ million dollars from the service disruptions
- Need to recognize the driving forces behind these service disruptions and impacts:
 1. Has never really recovered from I-695 revenue reductions, even with rate increases and service cuts. Has contributed to compounding maintenance issues.
 2. With retirement of the steel electric vessels, WSF has fewer boats. WSF wants to address assumptions about capacity needs.
 3. Population growth continues
- Leaves state with 2 scenarios:
 1. Work together to fund expected service
 2. Communicate what the current funds can support to lower the expectations
- Long-range plan is the opportunity to address these challenges, with preservation and maintenance the priority.

Discussion:

Commissioner Tortorelli, if we had that type of backlog in the Air Force, the planes would not have flown, with safety concerns.

Ms. Scarton, the Coast Guard continues to inspect and certify the boats.

Commissioner Tortorelli, yes, but still taking a risk.

Mr. Millar, the on-going maintenance and related route swaps is driven to ensure safety. In regards to capital investment, seeking to address when to replace boats earlier to avoid later costs.

Roy Jennings, Commissioner, WSTC, is there an assessment of costs that could have been saved from failures if maintenance had been done.

Ms. Scarton, we will have to wait for the investigations, though in some cases these were not maintenance issues (such as tangled crab pot lines).

Sen. Ranker noted wait times caused by the service disruptions also problematic – goes back to problems that existed when reservation system went into place.

Mr. Millar, do need to update/upgrade the reservation system, as well as dispatch system to allow for greater flexibility in times of crisis (good news: cost in the hundreds of thousands, not millions). Also, need better communication, including problems about lack of dry dock space, and budget issues for deferred maintenance. He has been beating the preservation drum, but continued push back from some stakeholders (for example port districts).

Commissioner Batra, back to equity issues – 70% fare box recovery too high. Need to direct greater percent of state transportation funds for WSF capital and operations. Need to address in budget and long-term plans. Need to revive the stature of the ferries as a state icon.

Ms. Scarton agrees that we need to prioritize the long-range planning further.

Mr. Millar, His perspective is do not do more with less – do less with less, or do something differently with less. He does not task WSDOT employees with doing more with less, just to get by while leadership works on addressing the problems.

Commission Litt, Sen. Ranker communications much improved between WSF and Commission with Ms. Scarton in place. Sees the communication issue a topic for additional Commission input.

Sen. Ranker, wants to recognize the incredible work by the WSF employees, and thanks Washington State Ferries for recognizing the events of the summer as a crisis.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

TRANSPORTATION 101

Carl See, Senior Financial Analyst, WSTC, presented an overview of the fiscal and policy framework of the state transportation system.

[Transportation 101](#)

TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES ON SAN JUAN ISLAND

Duncan Wilson, Town Administrator, City of Friday Harbor

- Maintenance & preservation a top interest
- Ferry rates a significant concern – As opposed to median incomes elsewhere on the island, City of Friday Harbor is a low-income area, with service-level jobs common. Friday Harbor’s (full-time) residents are at 75% of median WA household income
 - Includes clarification provided by Mr. Wilson in response to a follow-up request by Commissioner Serebrin
- Has the lowest return to residents on state revenues paid by county
- Solve the maintenance issues creating economic losses
- Build a second ferry slip and a passenger bridge for unloading to improve efficiencies and safety
- A very challenging year with the ferry service problems
- Review the demographics and household incomes for people in Friday Harbor. Need to enable people who work here to live here

Commissioner Serebrin asked to clarify the 75% reference – now noted above

Commissioner Litt clarified Commissioner Serebrin answer in regards to the sales tax.

Commissioner Jennings, when was the second ferry slip removed? Mr. Rosenfeld in audience notes it was 2005, with it preserved for the summer at local request.

Bill Watson, San Juan County Councilmember, echoes challenges expressed with ferry service

- Recognizes a choice people made to live here, but still seeks to address the challenges. These include:
 - Transit between islands and to mainland
 - International air travel to Canada – working to improve
 - Access to medical care, largely provided on mainland. Individuals need definitive means to get to the medical services, as do emergency service vehicles. Ties to improvements to reservation system and service improvements
- Recognizes challenges of the summer faced by Washington State Ferries, and the work of ferry staff

Todd Nicholson, Director, Port of Friday Harbor:

- Not addressing the ferry system, just that the ferries can create big waves by taking the turn too fast in the harbor
- Airport the port’s biggest connection to the transportation system, with the state a great partner for years
- Big challenges regarding airport financing for capital projects
 - \$1 million per year in federal funds for capital projects are available to the port of for “aeronautical uses”, such as the airport
 - Aeronautical uses is a port property designation by the federal government
 - However, 40% of revenues from self-sustaining airports come from non-aeronautical uses (such as marinas).

- Being directed to use the \$1 million per year on aeronautical uses only limits capacity to sustain these non-aeronautical uses
- The Port uses non-aeronautical revenue to support aeronautical uses (airport) operations and maintenance. So inability to use the federal funds on non-aeronautical capital projects limits economic development capacity

Commissioner Tortorelli asked if the port applied for a particular federal grant (Airport Improvement Program grant?) that was recently distributed. Mr. Nicholson said, “No they did not”.

Mr. Millar, our new aeronautics manager will be in touch.

Kraig Hansen, Owner, San Juan Transit:

- Private transit provider that serves as the county transit agency
- Ferry service delays created scheduling challenges for the service, but largely maintained schedule. Did add some spontaneous service to meet extra needs
- On Orcas and Lopez, less service time based on demand. Provided shuttle to food services from Lopez ferry line to town for people in line

Commissioner Young, are you making money on Lopez and Orcas services? Mr. Hansen, Orcas Island is subsidizing Lopez Island

Commissioner Jennings, How much is collected from fare box recovery? Mr. Hansen, \$5 per trip with 100% fare box recovery (no sales tax).

Kraig Hansen, Owner, San Juan Transit:

- 2 buses on San Juan, 1 Orcas, 1 Lopez, plus 3 more for additional services
- Largest bus has capacity for 29, most 20, a few 14

[Transportation in San Juan County](#)

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES ON ORCAS ISLAND

Rick Hughes, San Juan County Councilmember, first, thankful for work of WSF/WSDOT, including during the summer crisis:

- As only elected official on Ferry Advisory Committee, does take a system-wide perspective
- Noted that 4 of 5 ferries have gold band on the stack, recognizing 50 years of service – a blessing and a curse
- Noted letter to Governor’s Office he wrote to support increased dedicated funding to support paying deferred maintenance, terminals, and vessel construction, an investment that would partly be paid with increased revenues
- Need to increase capital vessel replacement schedule

- Obtained \$750,000 from state for Orcas Park & Ride, matched with \$500,000 from county – a great first step for multi-model regional and state cooperation; also noted terminal reconfiguration by WSF, and plans by county near the terminal that both provide ADA access
- Farmhouse Gang working on regional transit connections for airport and medical access being drivers
- July ferry ridership down 7.4% from last year – a major economic impact
- Does not agree about San Juan Island residents choosing to live here somehow disqualifying them from services. Everyone in the state has a choice of where to live and the state has the obligation to provide a basic level of infrastructure
- Need to find a way to provide dedicated ferry funding for all purposes
- Looking forward, wants a new terminal in Anacortes, a second slip in Friday Harbor, and improved transit access

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES AND SUCCESSES ON LOPEZ AND SHAW ISLANDS

Stephen Adams, Commissioner, Port of Lopez

- Non-staffed aviation airport
- Completing a master plan and working on a handful of projects
- Federal funding covers 90% of project costs (Airport Improvement Program grant?) but state portion of 5% is critical (as noted by Todd Nicholson before), with the other portion being (5%) from local
- Only airport in county without a weather station, which Medevac has made clear, is needed. Not reasonably able to meet FAA standards for installing, so need to address options

Commissioner Young, non-staffed is no small issue – lots of operations work by Commissioners. Also notes that Medivacs are up 20% the last year – an underappreciated role for airports

Jamie Stephens, San Juan County Councilmember, ferry landings with fewer conveniences than the other islands, and no reservations as result of a lack of space.

- Summer crises definitely posed economic impact
- Some had 10 hour waits at times with no bathrooms or food available for people in line, so improved communication is critical, as raised by Ms. Scarton
- For the County, the summer ferry schedule is not scheduled well for the workers here. Mr. Stephens requests a 15 min passenger stop (at Lopez?) to better accommodate county employees. Having a decent paying family wage job is valued, but difficult with high property costs and ferry service challenges
- Mr. Stephens requests a reconfiguration of the Lopez ferry terminal facilities. Traffic has increased since current configuration built, and it's no longer adequate
- Road project relocation to sustain/improve access to Iceberg Point, a designated part of the San Juan Islands National Monument. Built 60 years ago, it now has more housing. Wetlands to consider, erosion threats from sea-level rise, etc.

Mr. Stephens requests consideration of what is a county's responsibility for road replacement with limited expected lifespan with sea-level rise, or alternatively, with relocation. How to address conflicts with residents and how to address septic issues? Wants addressed in long-range WSDOT planning

Commissioner Young, have you seen an increase in aircraft traffic with the ferry delays? Mr. Adams: with no staff, no specific data, but it did seem like a busy summer.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

COUNTYWIDE TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES

Russ Harvey, Interim Public Works Director, San Juan County:

- 36 year San Juan County Public Works employee and lifelong resident
- Addressing connections between multiple jurisdictions in the county
- County Pop est.: 16,300
- The County does not pave roads on outer islands that are served – are dirt/gravel
- There are more private road miles in the county than county road miles: about 300 private road miles
- 60 inhabited islands, with county serving 7, WSF ferries serving 4
- Orcas and Lopez ferry landings quite remote from business centers (about 8 miles and 4 miles, respectively)
- County public works spends about \$62,000 a year on ferry fares
- 7 boats owned by the county
- Numerous private passenger ferry services provide access to unserved islands
- Barge services provide transportation for items that do not fit on ferries
- There are also landing craft style boats providing service to islands without ferry service, and to move gasoline and propane (not allowed on ferries)
- County maintains a series of a dozen maritime facilities, plus additional non-maintained facilities for the seven served islands. These provide vital links for the county on these islands
- Can legally use road funds to maintain these facilities thanks to legislation pushed by Commissioner Hughes

Colin Huntmer, Engineer, San Juan County:

- Discussing partnerships that are vital for successful projects
- Serve as local experts when working with partners on projects in the county, whether in a lead or supportive role for the project
- Helps maximize dollars spent on getting work on the ground despite regulatory requirements that can be costly, and despite competing timelines and priorities. The regulatory entitlement structure needs to be streamlined to support use of project dollars on the ground.
- Regarding the coastal road project on Lopez, one challenging question has been who to talk with about regulatory requirements, etc. for such a project. Very little clarity.

- Marine farm to market roads are essential – includes the county marine terminal facilities
- When vehicles from a state facility bleed onto county roads, it becomes a great time for partnership. Successful on Orcas (Park & Ride), needs more on Lopez.
- Look how to stretch transportation dollars with regulatory streamlining
- Use County as on the ground experts for partnering on projects

Jim Corenman, Chair, Ferry Advisory Committee member:

- 7 members on the San Juan County Ferry Advisory Committee (FAC)
- Provide advisory feedback on fares
- Seat on the FAC Exec Council and FAC-T and long-range plan team
- Counted 20 days with reduced service in July – August 2017
- Biggest loss is the loss of confidence that the boat will travel – loss of confidence in WSDOT, WSF
- Huge economic impact

Mr. Corenman was struck by Senator Ranker’s comments that only 10% of maintenance needs are actually funded in the budget.

- Concerned that this summer is the new normal for breakdowns – does not think the county could withstand or accept that
- Supports second ferry slip at Friday Harbor, and improvements to Lopez Island ferry terminal

Commissioner Young noted that FAC puzzles out the schedule each year, an under-appreciated task. Reiterates Mr. Corenman’s and Ms. Scarton’s statement about adjust funding or expectations, with funding the only acceptable solution.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

WASHINGTON STATE FERRIES

Ray Deardorf, Planning Director, Washington State Ferries, WSDOT and Stephanie Cirkovich, Director, Community Services & Planning, Washington State Ferries, WSDOT:

- 1999, 2009, 2019 plans
- 2009 plan accomplishments – largely met everything called for
- 2040 Requirements addressed, including collaboration with multiple other plans
- Discussion on operational strategies

Mr. Millar, these get to some of what Sen. Ranker spoke to this morning regarding the role of the Commission for operational oversight

- Addresses 2017 legislative guidance

Commissioner Tortorelli, timeframe for when we need to replace the next boat?

Mr. Deardorf, have assumed vessels can last 60 years, with one vessel five years from that mark, and four larger vessels 10 years from that mark, with the large vessels having more frequent problems. May need to reconsider the 60-year assumption.

Mr. Millar, other considerations are what propulsion mechanisms to invest in; disruptive transportation technology impacts, such as autonomous vehicles – how that impacts vehicle vs. passenger ridership; how to integrate with door-to-door planning instead of just dock-to-dock? All topics to address before buying new boats.

Commissioner Batra agreed with need to plan for disruptive technologies, including use of passenger only ferries.

Mr. Millar, need to remember that vehicle capacity will remain for freight, regardless.

Mr. Hughes, please remember to consider local needs with the long-term visioning – autonomous vehicle services will not be on Orcas and Lopez at same time as being adopted in Seattle.

Ms. Cirkovich, stakeholder engagement planned with six categories of stakeholders all contributing input for the long-range plan

- Very ambitious timeline for developing long-range plan – have about 15 months
 - Four with Policy Advisory Group (PAG) & Technical Advisory Group (TAG) groups, 3 more with Executive Advisory Group (EAG), and additional public input
 - Looking ahead, finalizing scope and hiring consultant (hopefully) by November 2017
 - Next TAG/PAG: September 21
 - Next EAG: December
 - Complete: Update to legislature in summer 2018/ present final plan to legislature in January 2019

Mr. Millar, seeking consent, not consensus; aggressive timeline for the number of stakeholder's involved and public engagement necessary

Commissioner Young, did I hear no new boats until this is complete?

Mr. Millar, with update in summer 2018, could move for requesting new boats in 2019 session. Partly depends on type of boat (already designed model or not) and propulsion, but mostly comes down to a source of revenue. Overall, cannot pit one part of state against another – need to have an informed discussion about the needs across the state; the long-range plan will help with this.

Mr. Deardorf discussed the Interisland & Sidney, BC services:

- Reviews routes details
 - Anacortes-San Juan's: 1.9 million passengers / 843,000 vehicles
 - Interisland: 103,000 vehicles, no passenger data
 - Sidney: 49,000 vehicles, 146,000 passengers

- Interisland service started in 1978/1979 with early experiments, with some service in 1980s; year round service began in 1990
 - Able to divert the boat to Anacortes on Friday and Sunday to assist with peak traffic
 - The faster MV Sealth scheduled to replace the retiring Evergreen class vessel by 2019
- Sidney, B.C. service
 - Only two vessels available with special requirements for the international travel.
 - Ridership has declined since peaks of mid-1970s through 1980s. In part, increased competition from BC Ferries and Victoria clipper. Ridership has stabilized over the last 10 years or so
 - Necessary coordination with Canada Customs & Immigration and US. Additional revenue from Duty Free store

[Washington State Ferries 2040 Long Range Plan](#)
[Washington State Ferries Interisland and Sidney, B.C.](#)

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

PRIVATE SECTOR TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS TO THE ISLAND

Todd Banks, President, Kenmore Air:

- Good summer for operations, but no windfall from the service problems – resources already committed
- 70+ years in business with several employees in San Juan Islands
- 100,000?+ riders per year – 9-10,000 per month in summer, about 1,000 or so in winter
 - 1/3 professional commuters
 - 1/3 people visitors with cabins/family here
 - 1/3 weekend getaways
- Sees increased travel from the tech crowd here – looking to expand peak shoulder months
- Lose money in winter – still a challenge to address
- Question: is this the Washington State Utilities and Transportation Commission? Ms. Griffith: nope, not us
- Importance of Lake Union and Boeing Field incredibly important, but bureaucracies of each are very challenging:
 - City perceives Kenmore Air as tour operator with 5 min tours around Space Needle, or for rich people taking fishing trips to Alaska;
 - Kenmore Air wants to emphasize the value of the service to parts of the state, such as the San Juan Islands
 - As small business, feels it's difficult working with government agencies, particularly with compliance
- Thankful for San Juan community. Focused on expanding shoulder seasons and optimistic about the opportunities ahead

Commissioner Young, how are landing conditions working out for Lopez, etc.? Mr. Banks, progressing though long process – almost to finish line.
Commissioner Young, on Lopez, becoming more aware of how many professionals use the service.

Loren DeShon, Operations Director, Westwind Aviation:
Strictly charter business here out of Friday Harbor. Here about 15 years. Flies to multiple San Juan Islands – 11 islands have airstrips – much more than, say, Gulf Islands, B.C. Three passengers in airplanes. Flies throughout state, Idaho, Canada. Would fly more, but a pilot shortage creating difficult. (Kenmore Air: 9-10 passengers per plane).

Discussion:

Ms. Griffith, what is your fare structure, especially as costs for car travel increases?

Mr. Banks, it covers costs, plus a bit of margin with extra on Friday and Sunday to manage demand. Seek 65-70% load factors: About \$160 each way to Seattle, with frequent flyer at about \$135.

Mr. DeShon, about \$375 to charter the plane to Seattle each way

Commissioner Batra, are you seeking to capture pre/post cruise ship traffic?

Mr. Banks has been a big challenge to crack into that market – no material impact. People seem to be saving money for the cruise trip itself.

Commissioner Batra, with 1/3 professional and 1/3 residents, etc., door-to-door service?

Mr. Banks, no, just to scheduled locations, though some charters.

Commissioner Tortorelli: Any seaplanes for fighting fires? Mr. Banks, not us, but 1/3 of revenue from parts, etc. – a competitor is building some seaplanes for fire fighting

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

TRANSPORTATION, TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Deborah Hopkins Buchanan, Executive Director, San Juan Islands Visitor Bureau

- Note: serves on San Juan Island Ferry Advisory Committee as business representative
- Tourism an important economic driver for San Juan Islands - \$211 million spent by visitors in San Juan County in 2016. Eases tax burden on local residents
- Agrees that this has been the worst summer for ferry service
- Most businesses and visitors love the reservation system – the predictability is great
- Service and reliability critical to residents, small businesses, and visitors
- WSF terminals and employees are most people’s first impression of San Juan Islands, and the boats are a tourist destination in themselves

- Washington State Ferries are responsible for transporting 85% of visitors
- San Juan Islands Visitors Bureau slogan: “Getting here is half the fun!” However, when media hypes up the service problems, it is a big hit to businesses.
- The summer months are critical for business, so the service disruptions are difficult
- Some business owner feedback – could use passenger ferry service
- Will know around November 1 about revenue impacts of the 20 or so days of service interruption this summer
- Need maintenance & preservation funding
- Need a back-up boat on demand in San Juan Islands
- Need pro-active action like a (good) business, not reactive
- Need zip code data from ferries and reservation system
- Would like later “reasonable” ferry scheduled in the summer from Friday Harbor to Anacortes (between 6:30 p.m. and 10 p.m.)
- Allow walk-ons on International ferry for coming up to Friday Harbor
- Need crossing guards funded
- Clean ferries and cheerful staff needed
- Better year-round connections from Anacortes
- 1-2 passenger ferry service in summer months could help, along with more parking in Anacortes

Discussion:

Commissioner Batra, regarding passenger ferries, King County already operating, along with Kitsap County. King County considering Lake Washington service and Tacoma considering service to Seattle. Encourages their support for pushing and planning for more of the same in San Juan County.

Mr. Millar, a couple of things to do as a team.

1. We can update reservation system to be more nimble for a crisis. Would love their ideas on how to make improvements.
2. We need better direct communication with each other instead of engaging through the media regarding problems

Ms. Buchanan agrees it can be of value to work on joint talking points. Regarding media problems, Chamber director had quotes taken out of context in large part.

Victoria Compton, San Juan County Economic Development Council

- Highest business licenses per capita for a county in the full state
- Thanks for the Commission’s engagement
- 4th generation small business owner
- Breakdowns impact businesses bottom-line, biz and customer trust; impact on medical needs; impact on paying overtime impact on delivering goods to San Juan Islands
- A good wake-up call that can help force us to improve planning
- All of us need to own this as an issue, as the problems are only bound to get worse

Discussion:

Commissioner Young, Have you seen any change in business usage with the reservation system (good or bad)?

Ms. Compton, some transition time, especially for residents, but businesses are generally supportive. One issue is that it is a bit clunky. In addition, as people now rely on the reservation system, breakdowns become more disruptive to that trust.

Action: None

Follow-Up: None at this time

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dan Behring:

Reservation system – with 90% of vessel capacity set aside for reservations, people do not trust that they can get on the boat with the 10% of capacity remaining for stand-by customers. For one-off deliveries, rely on making reservations at 7 a.m. two days before sailings (when last 30% of reservation capacity is released) to ensure delivery of goods to the islands.

Fares: the increasing separation between vehicle and passenger fares increasingly burdens San Juan Island residents, as walk-on is not a legitimate option.

Randy Gaylord, San Juan County Prosecuting Attorney:

Wants to speak to reliable interisland service – need options for interisland commuters that does not require being away from home for 12 hours. Was much better 20 years ago, and the winter schedule works well. Summer schedule is the problem.

TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

JERRY LITT, Chairman

ROY JENNINGS, Vice-Chairman

SHIV BATRA, Member

HESTER SEREBRIN, Member

JOE TORTORELLI, Member

DEBBIE YOUNG, Member

VACANT

ATTEST:

REEMA GRIFFITH, Executive Director

DATE OF APPROVAL