



**Washington State
Transportation Commission**

**FERRY FARE RATE SETTING HEARING
MEETING SUMMARY
JULY 26, 2017
10:00 A.M.**

**Puget Sound Regional Council Boardroom
1011 Western Avenue, Suite 500
Seattle, WA**

Chairman Litt: Called the hearing to order at 10:00 a.m.

Fare Setting

Ray Deardorf, Senior Planning Manager for the Washington State Ferries, WSDOT, presented a Summary of the Commission's 2017 -19 Fare Proposal, the public outreach meetings, and a summary of comments on the proposal.

Proposal Specifics

- General fare increase to meet legislature's fare revenue target, October 2017 and October 2018
 - Vehicle fare increases of 2.9% in 2017 and 2.5% in 2018
 - Passenger fare increases of 2.5% in 2017 and 2.1% in 2018
- Continue slight spreading of passenger and vehicle fares
- Oversize vehicles – fare increase less than vehicles under 22' to get back into proportional alignment based on length and height
- School group flat fee increase and application to home school customers
- Charge licensed two or three wheeled vehicles the motorcycle/stowage fare
- Charge bicycles towing any type of trailer the motorcycle/stowage fare
- Fire district fares – language update
- Commercial accounts – reinstate frequent discount
- Changes to prohibit Wave2Go commercial resale
- Small vehicle length determination – customer documentation at tollbooth

Summary of Comments

- Fare increase too high
 - Affordability issue
 - Should be tied to better service

- Oversized vehicles should have the same increase as other vehicles
- Residents should get a break on fares
- Objections to charging bikes with trailers the motorcycle/stowage fare
- Passengers and bikes should not have fare increases
- Supportive of increases
- Public meetings should be in more locations
- WSF should have a low income fare
- Specific wording on bicycle/mopeds unlicensed or licensed

Options to Respond to Comments:

(1) Bicycle towing

Charge motorcycle/stowage fare only to bikes towing kayaks or canoes.

- Easily identifiable from the tollbooth
- Kayaks and canoes already are charged the motorcycle/stowage if they are walked aboard

All other bicyclists towing trailers would pay applicable bicycle surcharge.

(2) Electric-assist bikes

For the purpose of WSF fare determination, the bicycle fare category shall include both bicycles as defined in RCW 46.04.071 and electric-assisted bicycles as defined in RCW 46.04.169.

(3) Passenger fares

June revenue forecasts are a little higher; the original fare proposal is now forecast to generate **\$381.73** million. This provides an opportunity for the Commission to slightly reduce the proposed passenger fares and enhance the passenger/vehicle fare spread.

- The 2017 passenger fare rates would go up **2.1%**, not 2.5% as originally proposed – this still generates **\$381.45** million
- This is in alignment with original FAC-T range of 2.1% -2.5%

Public Comment on the Fare Proposal

Vicky Clark, Cascade Bicycle Club, thanked Mr. Deardorf and Commission staff for their work. She asked that in the future the Club be engaged in development of fare proposals. There needs to be some effort at education of riders and staff at terminals that have few bicyclists.

Action:

Commissioner Jennings moved adoption of the 2017 – 19 fare proposal.

Commissioner Young seconded the motion and suggested four amendments:

- Reducing the passenger fare increase in 2017 to 2.1%
- Revising the definition of bicycle as proposed to include bicycles as defined in RCW 46.04.071 and electric-assisted bicycles as defined in RCW 46.04.169
- No action on bike trailers, but retain the stowage fee for bikes hauling kayaks and canoes
- No fee on interisland towing of canoe or kayaks

Commissioner Young also moved that WSF collect information on bicycles hauling trailers and the impact on deck space, by route and by season. She asked that Washington State Ferries (WSF) report back by fall 2018. Commissioner Jennings agreed to Commissioner Young's motion to amend.

The Commission unanimously adopted 2017 -2019 fares, as amended.

Commissioner Batra noted that fares have nearly doubled since 2000. He suggested that the Commission work with Washington State Ferries on a sustainable funding source. Commissioner Jennings agreed with the idea, which the Commission then discussed.

Commissioner Tortorelli noted that all taxpayers pay for capital costs.

Commissioner Young suggested that the WSF long-range planning process maybe an appropriate place for this work.

The ferry fare hearing was then adjourned.

[WSF Summary of Comments](#)

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