RESOLUTION NO.___________

A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL TO INVESTIGATE THE REPLACEMENT OF THE LUMMI ISLAND FERRY “WHATCOM CHIEF” WITH THE WASHINGTON STATE FERRY “HIYU” WHICH IS PLANNED TO BE AVAILABLE AS “SURPLUS” ON OR BEFORE JUNE 2015.

WHEREAS, the Ferry Whatcom Chief was built in 1962 and is over 52 years old, it exceeds the International Standard safe life of 35 years for a saltwater ferry, and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Ferry HIYU was built in 1967 it was rebuilt in 2007, and

WHEREAS, annual dry dock costs for the Ferry Whatcom Chief seem to be increasing in recent years, and

WHEREAS, anticipated replacement of the entire deck house, replacement of the vehicle deck and repairs to the electrical system will exceed the worth of the repaired vessel, and

WHEREAS, the Ferry Whatcom Chief is loaded with vehicles such that most vehicle passengers have no safe egress from or access to their vehicle should an emergency occur (Subpart 78.40 – Vehicular Ferries), and

WHEREAS, the Ferry Whatcom Chief does not provide adequate space for emergency response equipment, supplies and aid to the Island in a timely manner, and

WHEREAS, the Ferry Whatcom Chief is not a safe vessel to transport vehicles and passengers to any other further destination should there be an major issue with the Gooseberry Point ferry landing, and

WHEREAS, the availability of an immediate replacement vehicular ferry for the Whatcom Chief is virtually non-existent and the time required to obtain a new-built vehicular ferry is approximately three years, and
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Whatcom County Council does hereby direct the County Executive to investigate the replacement of the Ferry Whatcom Chief, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Whatcom County Council set the first priority for the County Executive to develop the benefits and savings, if any, to obtain and/or purchase the Washington State Ferry HIYU, as a replacement for the Ferry Whatcom Chief, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Whatcom County Council understands that the Ferry HIYU it is scheduled to be disposed of by the State of Washington as “surplus” in the spring of 2015, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Whatcom County Council understands that this is time sensitive issue and that there has already been a good deal of investigative work completed by LIFAC and some Island residents that will receive full consideration by the County Executive, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Whatcom County Council will ask the Whatcom County Executive to address the questions in Exhibit A, as well as their own questions in order to help determine if the Ferry HIYU could be an acceptable replacement for the Whatcom Chief.

APPROVED this _____ day of __________, 2014.

ATTEST: 

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

________________________________________  _______________________________________
Dana Brown Davis, Clerk of the Council       Carl Weimer, Council Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

________________________________________
Civil Deputy Prosecutor
EXHIBIT A

Suggested questions whose answers may help to help determine if the Ferry HIYU would be a suitable replacement of the Ferry Whatcom Chief.

1. The HIYU has almost twice the draft of the Chief. Will either of the landings require dredging? What would this cost?
2. The HIYU is almost 19 feet wider than the Chief. Public Works is currently working on relocating some of the dolphins. Does it make sense to widen them to accommodate a larger ferry? Would this be more expensive and how much more that current planned work?
3. The Chief requires dry dock repairs on a yearly basis. The HIYU is dry-docked every two years, and is a larger ferry. Will there be savings or loss of dry-dock costs as expressed by-annually?
4. The HIYU currently requires a crew of four with a Master with superior license to that for the Chief. By either adding tonnage frames or receiving a Coast Guard Waiver the boat may be re-rated to a lower classification so the existing crew licenses maybe used as well as having the possibility of operating with a crew of three. Is this an issue that ought to be pursued? What would be the cost to add tonnage frames?
5. If the HIYU was obtained from the State to replace the Whatcom Chief, what would be the disposition of the Whatcom Chief? Would the various counties share a cost for it to become the back-up ferry during dry-docks and/or in case of failures? Should it be sold or scrapped? What would be the cost to keep it as a back-up or what is the value as scrap? Where would the Chief be stored?
6. How long does Whatcom County plan to keep the Whatcom Chief in service? What is the cost for the needed major repairs? What would be the cost to rebuild the Whatcom Chief, how long would that take, and what vessel would replace the Chief during the repair period?
7. What would be the acquisition cost from the State for the Ferry HIYU? The public has already paid for the ferry and it would continue is the service within the State.
8. What would be the costs to modify a section or space on the vehicle deck of the HIYU to accommodate Americans with Disabilities?
9. Because the Ferry HIYU can handle a larger number of vehicles and large trucks can the number of runs per day be reduced and still meet the needs for the Island
Residents? What would be the savings? Could this offset the cost of an additional crew member?
10. If the Whatcom Chief were kept as “back-up” would the savings during dry dock offset costs for an additional crew member, the cost of moorage for the Chief, etc.?
11. Would the larger ferry safer for the Island residents overall?
12. What spare parts are available from the State for the Ferry HIYU? Are spare parts readily available?
13. Please review the comparison table on the following page and address costs and savings for the various differences between the ferries.
## COMPARISON: CHIEF / HIYU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Whatcom Chief</th>
<th>HIYU</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year Built</strong></td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>1967/2007</td>
<td>-5/-45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Length</strong></td>
<td>99.5 Feet OA.</td>
<td>162 Feet OA</td>
<td>62 Feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Width</strong></td>
<td>44 Feet</td>
<td>63 Feet</td>
<td>19 Feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Lightship Draft</strong></td>
<td>6 Feet</td>
<td>9.8 Feet</td>
<td>3.8 Feet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Max Passenger Capacity</strong></td>
<td>97</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>+103 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Passenger Cabin Capacity</strong></td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40X2*</td>
<td>+44 people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Usual Car Load</strong></td>
<td>20</td>
<td>34- WSF</td>
<td>+14 Cars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Legal Car Load</strong></td>
<td>12-14 (legally)</td>
<td>36+</td>
<td>+20-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vessel Class</strong></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crew Size</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4 as is**</td>
<td>+1**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fuel Consumption Est</strong></td>
<td>142 gpd @ 39 rtrips/d</td>
<td>83 gpd @ 20 rtrips/d</td>
<td>-59 gpd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Max Vehicle Size (tons)</strong></td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50+</td>
<td>=25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Restrooms</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes (M&amp;W)</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wheelchair Accessible</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Space Available ***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* HiYu has two passenger spaces. One would be closed off in daily service. The only time two would likely be used would be for special events and during emergency flood service.

** HiYu is currently licensed for a minimum crew of 4. Lowest crew number may be as low as 3, up to 150 passengers, depending on ultimate tonnage rating and Coast Guard Review.

***A small passenger space for disabled people can be made by adding onto the right caisson, into the closest right outside auto lane. Loss of approximately one car space will result.
Comments:

I would like to see the SaniKans put back at Gooseberry Pt for the comfort of people waiting for the ferry.

I would like to see 3° per trip surcharge go away.

I would like to see a drive on ferry available during dry dock.
Guemes Island Ferry
2013 Operations Status Report

Skagit County Public Works
Mary Ross Skagit County Ferry Documents:

Last month during public comment portion of the meeting I pointed out to members of the committee and audience present that Skagit County had recently released a draft of a Ferry Replacement Plan for public comment. I was made aware of this document by a posting by Bill Fox on Lummi Island Next Door. After reading the entire document the just prior to the meeting I was pretty upset with what I read in section 2.4 which was a service comparison between Guemes and Lummi Island Ferry Service. The numbers and conclusions in the study greatly disturbed me and I made it my mission to encourage as many people as possible to read this comparison and see if they were motivated to ask “Why are there such large differences in the numbers in terms of ridership, operating costs, and fare box revenues between two county operated ferry systems that serve very similar sized populations, and have almost identical route lengths, .” While not necessarily agreeing with the recommendations in the report I was very impressed with the though coverage given to deciding whether to replace, rebuild and lengthen, or just maintain the current ferry. The cost benefit analysis section is similar to what both Greg and Jim presented on the Plattsburg, and also addresses things that Chuck has put forth some of his models. I know that LIFAC will be addressing similar issues in the near future if recommending pursuing the HIYU or a replacement ferry or maintaining status quo with the Chief. I feel strongly that this study could serve as a model for what a well thought out long or short term ferry replacement study should include. Arguments for three different possible directions for Skagit County to pursue are clearly presented with well supported cost projections based on hard data rather than speculation. The study has now been published for public comment by all concerned stake holders, Ferry Users, County Taxpayers, and County Commissioners and administrators. As I read the report and about the process that Skagit County is using to address the future of Guemes Island Ferry service I have noticed how much effort is being extended by Skagit County’s Public Works dept to provide all stake holders with clear easy to understand ferry usage data, revenue sources, explanations of expenses, how ferry revenue targets are established, attempts to get input via customer satisfaction surveys (with almost a 50% of full time population survey response rate)

I brought up my concerns over the large discrepancy in costs shown in the comparison between Lummi Island and Skagit county Ferry operations at the PLIC board meeting and my desire to help LIFAC in it’s upcoming discussions on Fare structure, discussions on Ferry replacement, etc. I feel that this ferry replacement document is a good example of a report that provides information for stakeholders to make an informed decision. PLIC Board gave me the OK to print copies of Skagit’s report and present them to you at this meeting to put into your notebook with the Ferry Task Force Recommendations that we provided for you when this Committee was founded.
It is our hope that it might be helpful as a model and guide if LIFAC needs to develop similar recommendations re ferry replacement.

For many years I have looked at the Skagit County Ferry Website and been impressed with how detailed and thorough and easy to read and understand their reports are. I particularly like how they show how ferry deficit reimbursement funds and mvft funds are used in calculation of their annual fare box recovery target. It all looks pretty straightforward to me not nearly as complex as it has been made out to be. I am giving you a copy of Skagit County's 2014 draft Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report to review to see if it might be helpful in developing your recommendations on ferry rates. I think this document is a good example that clearly shows how revenue targets for fare box, road fund, and mvft/ferry deficit funds all play in the calculation. I really would like to urge LIFAC to encourage our ferry's administration to work on creating clear easily understood documents such as these that help all stakeholders Taxpayers, Ferry Users, County decision makers understand the issues, numbers costs vs benefits, and basis for recommendations on fare structure, or ferry replacement, contingency planning, safety etc.

I also noted that Skagit county has a history of holding regular public meetings on Guemes Island One such meeting was held just last week for the purpose of getting public comment on both of the documents/plans that I have just provided for you. PLIC Board Member Jansen Pierce attended that meeting along with Jim Dickinson. Jansen said that the meeting was very well attended, standing room only, he was impressed with the number of knowledgeable county employees and officials were at the meeting and that questions posed by the public were able to be answered directly by those responsible. This encouragement and welcoming of open communications between ferry users, and those responsible for ferry operations would be something for LIFAC and Whatcom County to strive for.

The huge elephant sitting in the living room for me remains Table 6 Comparison of Guemes Island and Lummi Island Ferries from Page 10 of Skagit Public Works Ferry Replacement Plan. Section 2.4 Service Comparison

On first glance I was really upset to see the glaring differences in ridership, Fares, Number of Runs, Revenues and Expenditures summarized in this table. I really wanted to know how Skagit could be serving so many more passengers and carrying so many more vehicles and still maintain much lower operating costs meet fare box revenue goals, and have a passenger fare of $3.50 and a car fare of $10.00.

As I looked closer at the numbers I made some phone calls and discovered that some of the numbers are not fair comparisons. Ridership numbers on Guemes are based on the number of passengers to and from the island. Ridership numbers on the Lummi
Ferry are based only on number of passengers going to the island. Just doubling the Lummi Ridership (assuming what goes on eventually goes off the island) the passenger numbers look more reasonable but still these figures are unsupported based on an assumption not a verifiable count. If passengers and vehicles were actually counted in both directions on the Lummi Ferry we'd have more exact data. Note: Chantalle from PW told me today that the numbers reported to the Corps of Engineers (?) were based on numbers of human beings on board the ferry each run to the island not on numbers of fares sold. I had been under the mistaken impression that the numbers were based on fares sold.

The huge differences in Operating Expenditures and Revenues between the two systems really concerns and members of the PLIC Board. How come it is costing $901,273 more per year to operate our ferry over a similar route. The tidelands lease only accounts for $200,000 per year difference. The Guemes ferry does not do as many runs as the Lummi Island Ferry and reduction in service definitely accounts for some more savings but not sure it accounts for $700,000. I would like to recommend that LIFAC or Whatcom county look closer into how Skagit County operates its ferry system and see if there might be some lessons on how to cut operating expenses, facilitate better communication between all stakeholders, obtain the data needed to determine how to structure fares to meet specific budget goals, and make ferry fares more affordable. L

A specific example is to look at Whatcom County's Public Works Ferry Operations Report fiscal year 2013 posted on the ferry Website yesterday. Comparing it to Skagit County's 2013 Ferry Operations Report would be a good place to start.

MY Personal Recommendations:

Look at how Skagit Collects and records Passenger and Vehicle Data and see if it can work here.

Look at how Skagit Reports to Stakeholders via detailed published on line reports, newsletters, on island meetings with public, and regularly scheduled meetings with their ferry committee and see if it is a model worth aspiring to here.

Look at how Skagit provides all these services for $700,000 less annually and meets its 65/35 Split charging $3.50 for a passenger, and $10.00 RT for a vehicle during peak season, and less during the off season.

Examine why Whatcom county ferry operations costs have been going up every year while Skagit's costs have had fluctuations sometime up, sometimes down but not going
up up up. Would seem logical that we are paying similar rates for crew wages, fuel for ferry, and given that their ferry is younger than ours I can see possibly our maintenance costs being a little higher.