LUMMI ISLAND FERRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (LIFAC)
Nineteenth Meeting

September 2, 2014

CALL TO ORDER
Committee Chair Mike McKenzie called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the Lummi Island Church, Bellingham, Washington.

ROLL CALL
Present: Mike McKenzie, Greg Brown, Stu Clark, Chris Colburn, Charles Antholt, and Byron Moye.
Absent: Robert Busch.

FLAG SALUTE

MINUTES CONSENT
1. Approve minutes of September 2, 2014 LIFAC Meeting

ANNOUNCEMENTS / SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Mike McKenzie, Chair –
• Commented on parking in the right of way along the county roads, in regard to the dry dock. He corresponded with an e-mail regarding the Ordinance and the interpretation form the Sheriff’s Office was the it is “legal to park on the right-of-way of a county road as long as the car is not on the road itself and that no vehicle is permitted to remain in that spot for any extended period of time.” He could not get a definition on what an extended period of time is. But, after an extended period of time the vehicle can be impounded.

Rob Ney – Public Works Special Programs Manager
• First topic was the dolphin replacement project. It is going very well and appear to be a little ahead of schedule. As this is a new contractor for the County the Engineering staff is very please to date. Anticipate competition on the Gooseberry side later this week and they will be drilling a couple of test piling on the Island side. So far they have not come across anything that would cause an outage.
• The second topic was in regard to the notification process when the ferry last went down. As he is now in this position it happened the first week in the job. He is researching different options and hopes to bring something forward at the next LIFAC meeting.
• Lastly, dry dock is being completed in Tacoma rather than Elliot Bay. Due to the longer (12 hour) travel for the ferry, the floats will be installed for the passenger ferry after the last run tonight. This should help everyone by eliminating the normal morning delay to set up the floats.
Questions:

- **Jim Dickenson** asked who the contractor is. Rob was not certain on the name of the contractor or the dry dock in Tacoma.
- **Councilmember Brenner** asked about the dolphins. She asked for some reassurance that if the County did get a larger ferry, that the dolphins could be easily relocated and how much it would cost. Rob responded that theoretically they can be moved. He commented that they could be vibrated out and driven back in and the county would not have to purchase new pilings. The cost to move them is still “a lot of money”. The piling are currently sized specifically for the Whatcom Chief, so a different boat would be a different scenario.
- **Mike McKenzie** asked that Rob address the increase for disabled parking during dry dock. Rob responded that the number was the same as in previous dry docks. It is that same as last year, but he thinks it is more that than two years ago.
- **Mike Skehan** asked if they had set a date to review the ferry finances. Rob replied that it needs to be sooner rather than later as the Public Works Financial Services Manager is resigning. Rob will communicate a date in the very near future.
- **Charles Antholt** asked if Rob has read the Guemes Report. Rob responded that he has read it. Antholt commented that he was impressed with the way that they carried out the analysis of the three options. It seems to him that it is similar as we need to determine how long to keep the Chief in operation, possibly a used boat or finally a new boat. Would you anticipate that this is what the county needs to do to move forward? Rob responded that it is up to the Council to make that decision, but that it is a very well rounded report that outlines the three options. The cost of maintenance on the different vessels was also well explained.
- **Councilmember Brenner** asked about the existing relationship between the existing ferry and the Coast Guard regarding ADA compliance and stuff. How long can we get away with this stuff? Rob does not know if anyone has the answer for that. Rob says the ferry keeps passing the inspections so therefore it keeps operating. Jim Dickenson comments that the ADA is not an issue with operation of the ferry as it existed prior to the law, but the storage of cars is an issue. He feels that the ferry is on very borrowed time as it does not meet the CFRs for this.
- Rob is scheduled to be out of town during the next LFAC Meeting.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**
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document is not to be considered as the final minutes. All information
contained herein is subject to change upon further review and approval by the
Lummi Ferry Island Advisory Committee.

- Wynne Lee asked what the process is for keeping LIFAC related e-mails is so that the public could
  have access if requested.
- Mike Skehan, Long Range Planning Sub-Committee Chairman introduced Members from the
  committee:
  o Rhayma Blake
  o Rich Fry
  o Beth Walukas Louis
  o Charles Antholt
  o Bryon Moye
- Mary Ross asked if the subcommittee or group studying fare targets are referencing the Skagit
  Guemes Operations Report. She would hope that the subcommittee would come up with
  recommendations similar to the report to provide sustainable fares based on reality. She feels
  that this report is a good model to use.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Report from Long-Range Planning Subcommittee
   a. Antholt commented that the subcommittee has had two meetings. There was discussion
      about the scope and it was agreed that there had been a good start. Rich Fry and Beth
      Walukas Louis will be providing the next scope draft for the next subcommittee meeting
      on September 16th. The biggest problem with the first draft of the scope is that we need
      to keep in mind what eventually LIFAC will have to pass on to the Council and that is some
      kind of a recommendation with respect to what we should do about replacement of the
      Chief and a notion of cost. He suggested that may be some focus groups organized that
      represent different communities on the Island to get a feel and to build a foundation for
      what the Lummi Island residents want in the future. Chair Mike Skehan is concerned with
      the process and meeting deadlines toward the Comprehensive Plan and so forth, while
      he was more concerned about us getting it right and taking the time that is necessary to
      do that.
   b. Skehan comments that Antholt kind of summed up where they are. They have had a
      couple of lively meetings and talked about lots of things. He agrees that using the public
      process to conduct outreach to help validate what they are doing both on and off the
      Island. This is also County issue and they hope to have buy-in from the communities prior
      to sending recommendations to the County Council. He is trying to shoot for about 12
      months for the process. This would meet with the Comprehensive Plan Update in 2016
      and would enable the information to get into the Sic-Year Transportation plan as soon as
      possible.
   c. Questions:
      i. Clark asks if the public input for the task force effort available for review and
         reference. Skehan comments that it is public record and is available. Jim
         Dickenson, Rhayma and himself attended the Finance Meeting and they are
         already looking into such things as:
            1. Demographics
            2. Constraints on growth on Lummi Island
            3. Building Lots
            4. 20 year data on the power cable
2. Report from the Ferry Replacement Subcommittee.
   a. **Brown** comments that the subcommittee had had one meeting. There were eight people including:
      i. **Councilmember Brenner**
      ii. **Jim Dickenson**
      iii. **Mike Kmiecik**
      iv. **Bill Fox**
      v. **Nancy Gale**
      vi. **Jansen Pierce**
      vii. **Tom Philpot**
      viii. **Greg Brown**
   b. **Brown** said that the subcommittee started off with a general agenda and a list of various topics (Attached). The subcommittee went through the list and revised some of the scope list items. He said commented that he had put together some general notes from the meeting. One of the first parts of the meeting was to organize how the meetings would be run and it was determined that it would be run much as the Task Force meeting rather than the LIFAC meetings. The meetings will be more open to as be more of a workshop or workgroup setting. They will be completely open meetings.
   c. **Brown** commented that the mission statement was revised to read “We are going to investigate the value and life of the Whatcom Chief and look at options for a new and/or a used replacement ferry.”
   d. **Brown** talked about some of the various reports from the agenda and topics from the list, but pointed out that this sub-committee feels more of a time crunch as they feel their recommendation regarding a replacement ferry needs to be made by this spring when the HIYU becomes surplus.
   e. **Jim Dickenson** commented that he felt the HIYU should be addressed by the end of the year as the Washington State Ferry system is in trouble. He believes with their current issues and when the next new ferry comes on around the first of next year that they will be forced to make a decision on surplus ferries. The subcommittee will be evaluating different ferry designs, drawings, the Sanpol, the WC “new ferry”, the Whatcom Chief and therefore he feels recommendations will be based on technical data and/or exiting data on file with the County rather that whether or not someone like the looks of something. He comments that he is attempting to arrange a tour of the HIYU at Eagle Harbor very soon. This will be the subject of planning over the next couple of weeks.
f. Rhayma Blake asks if there is going to be some kind of a report on the condition of the Whatcom Chief during the current dry dock that will help to determine its value. Brown responds that he believes that there will be a condition report based on the repairs completed and the unexpected work identified. He is sure this will be made available to LIFAC and for the subcommittees. Rob Nye commented that every three years they do a full hull survey and that will be this dry dock.

g. Brown asked the question about correspondence and communication between the subcommittees and Rob Ney, i.e. Public Works.
   i. Rob Nye responded after discussion that he would like all the correspondence be directed to him through Mike McKenzie, the LIFAC Chair. The subcommittees can send the request to Mike and he put them on the letterhead and send them off to Rob.

h. Wynne Lee asked a general question regarding documents. She asked if Public Works have a place on their website where someone can search for documents on the ferry.
   i. Rob Nye responded that there were lots of reports for the ferry available on the website. For example when the report from Elliot Bay is reviewed it will be placed on the website.

i. Jansen Pierce asked if James Lee has sent any information to LIFAC that had been requested. Brown responded that he thought the last information requested was from Antholt ne was not sure anyone had followed up to see if it was provided. Antholt commented that it didn’t happen.

j. Antholt commented that he thought during the April or May meeting that LIFAC had come to the conclusion that it was time to get a professional opinion about the life expectancy of the Chief. The dilemma is that the HIYU opportunity is coming up soon but you can’t review the HIYU until we have a feel or understanding about what we can expect from the Chief. And, what the implications at least financially for a new ferry.

k. Jim Dickenson commented that the subcommittee of ferry replacement would be in contact with the Department of Ecology, the Corp of Engineers and the Coast Guard. We may need some opinion from Elliot Bay, i.e. what would happen if you widened the Chief out, what is difference in buoyancy between aluminum and steel hulls, etc.

l. Mike McKenzie commented that he liked the way the subcommittee meeting were set up but reminded them that the meetings must have an agenda, provide meeting notification at least 24 hours prior to the meeting and provide for public comment.

3. Next Steps for the Ferry Fares Model
   a. Antholt commented that he and Colburn were waiting to meet with Rob and Chantel from PW and Finance. They want to talk about the ferry fund and what impact it can have on the fares. McKenzie commented that we have requested for 3 members of LIFAC and a citizen (Mike Skehan) to meet with them and if others want to attend then we would just have to send out a public notice that there is a potential for a quorum. The meeting will be prior to the next LIFAC meeting.

   b. Colburn reflected back on the presentation he and Antholt had made a couple months ago, that a little more of the fare fund information will give them a way to test a reserve amount and validate if there data makes sense.

   c. Brown commented in regard to Mike Skehan’s presentation at the last meeting and asked if I just didn’t make sense to take a dollar off passengers and a dollar off vehicles w/ driver and see how that would work for an initial recommendation. Rather than to try and make
it perfect at this point maybe we should try a couple of things and continue to move ahead
on making it perfect. Colburn and Antholt responded that they needed the model to
show us what to do.

4. LIFAC Recommendations to Council
   a. The recommendation was to request that the dry dock date me moved further back past
      the September 1st holiday. McKenzie commented that he will move forward on this.
   b. The recommendation for the Council to go forward on the HIYU investigation was
      questioned with the current work of the subcommittees. Brown commented that he felt
      that the recommendation should move ahead in conjunction with the subcommittee
      work. Brown make a motion that LIFAC make a recommendation that the County moves
      ahead to look at the option of replacing the Whatcom Chief with the HIYU. There was not
      second to the motion.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Antholt introduced Charles Bailey, a new resident on the Island.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business

TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR THE NEXT WORK SESSION

The date for the next meeting is Tuesday August 5th

CALL TO ORDER
ROLL CALL
FLAG SALUTE
MINUTES CONSENT
PRESENTATION
   Mike McKenzie – General Update
OLD BUSINESS
   Update on Fare Analysis Study – Mtg with PW/Finance
   Letters of Recommendation to Council
   Update for Long-range Planning Subcommittee
   Update for Ferry Replacement Subcommittee
NEW BUSINESS
ADJOURN

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

The Committee approved these minutes on Ret., 7, 2014

ATTEST: __________

Michael McKenzie, Committee Chair