

## **AICAB SPECIAL MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES**

**January 28, 2016**

(Subject to AICAB Approval)

**Members Present:** Joe Howells, Rich Sullivan, Dave Albertson, Bobbi Sullivan, Pat Owen, Buzz Thome, Lauren Kirby, Carol Paschal, Elizabeth Emerick, Chris Frye.

**Call to Order and Verification of Quorum:** The Special Meeting was called to order by Chairman Howells at approximately 6:30 P.M. The roll was called and a quorum was confirmed. The pledge of Allegiance was observed.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA:** Approved as written.

**Purpose for Special Meeting:** Chairman Howells explained the purpose of the Special Meeting is to continue the discussion/review of the Waterborne Transportation Study. After AICAB's discussion in the Modified Committee of the Whole, the audience will be invited to participate in the discussion.

**Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:** It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2016, as written.

### **ADJORNED TO COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE AT 6:30 P.M.:**

Chairman Howells opened the session with remarks aimed at setting a positive tone for our deliberations. He acknowledged this is an emotionally charged issue, and called for all involved to be creative, non-adversarial, and to listen to all sides being presented. If done correctly, this process can strengthen our community.

Dave Albertson stated that our major challenge/problem is the financial danger to our ferry service, and how ferry services will be preserved and funded in the future. Pat Owen said it's better to offer multiple recommendations, knowing that not all will be acted upon.

The main topic discussed was the fare recovery rate; particularly how it is affected by the proposed fuel surcharge. There was general agreement that the surcharge should be calculated on a yearly, not quarterly basis, and that it should not exceed 10% per year. Key to this is how the budgeted fuel cost is calculated to begin with. If the County budgets low, the surcharge would be certain to kick in. We need to see the method for how the budget is calculated – i.e. an average of 5 years actual cost. There should be a stated policy on how the base is set.

There was general discussion about the fare box recovery rate, including what is and isn't included, how it compares to other ferry systems, etc. No specific recommendations were offered.

Carol will do some research on how the surcharge calculations would work, and come with some proposed policy language to our next meeting.

### **Reconvene Anderson Island Citizen Advisory Board:**

The chair reconvened the Board at approximately 8:15 P.M.

### **Issues and Comments from the floor:**

#### **Comments regarding fuel surcharge:**

- If fuel expenses are calculated on a quarterly basis, the summer quarter would show disproportionate costs due to extra runs, and result in surcharges the following quarter.
- What is the county's process for purchasing fuel? Is there a more economical method?
- We haven't seen the budget for fuel go down in the past few years in spite of lower prices.
- The County should track fuel charges by quarter, but adjust at the end of the year, with a 10% max based on the fuel cost.
- There already is a fare increase budgeted for 2017.

#### **Comments regarding extra ferry runs:**

- They are essential for sustainability, and we may need to financially support them in the short run.
- If many new people move to the island, we may not have the housing inventory. Others thought that we have latent inventory, and it should be no problem to accommodate new residents.
- There will need to be serious marketing to attract new residents
- Don't count on military families due to their need to be available 24/7.
- It will take time for ridership on new runs to grow. 6:15 riders may jump to 5:15.
- It's possible to spread out the current schedule to extend the time the ferry runs without adding new runs.
- Not everyone is on board thinking that the sustainability of the ferry system requires population growth.
  - Growth would bring higher assessed home values, and drive housing prices up.
  - Risk of increased crime with growth
    - Alternative perspective that we'd be attracting working families. May drive out some of the residents with riskier behaviors.

- The report recommends addition the extra Friday and Sunday runs in 2016, and the extra morning and evening runs in 2017. This should be switched.

**How to pay for increases in service:**

- Some people are willing to pay more in fares
- Dave Albertson suggested that if the second ferry was eliminated, money would be freed up to fund service expansion of one boat.  
(Note: this is not an option listed in the report)
  - Work with other counties to use extra boat for fill-ins. Leases could help keep our fares down.
  - Dock size could be deterrent to other counties using our extra boat.
  - What would our back-up plan be if our one boat goes down.
- Doug Richardson has secured money for extra runs in the past, and could possibly do so again.
- The County could fund the extra runs on a trial basis to determine if there is enough demand.

**Miscellaneous:**

- Census data used in the report is old and likely under represents our young people.
- Audience members appreciated the switch to Thursday evening.

**Adjournment:** 8:30 P.M. Next meeting to be determined.