

## **AICAB REGULAR MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES**

### **January 8, 2016 @ Anderson Island Community Club**

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

**Call to Order and Verification of Quorum:** The regular meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Carol at approximately 7:07pm and a quorum was declared. The pledge of Allegiance was observed.

**Adoption of Agenda:** Carol stated that the installment of new officers should be added to the agenda.

**Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes:** It was moved, seconded, and unanimously agreed to approve the minutes of the October 9, 2015 regular meeting minutes as written.

**Reports to the Board: -**

Treasurer's Report: Rich Sullivan, same as last meeting. No changes, balance still \$388.62

**Introduction of Guests:** The Vice Chair Carol welcomed and introduced Pierce County Councilmember Doug Richardson, and Councilmember Assistant Alice McDaniel.

**Old Business:**

Waterborne Transportation Study (WTS): The study shows that ridership is declining and changes need to be made to increase ridership so that we can maintain the ferry system long term. Vice Chair Carol dismissed the board into a Committee of the Whole to discuss the WTS at approximately 7:13pm. Vice Chair Carol asked Buzz to go through the recommendations from the WTS study. Discussion ensued over what data was used to determine the current demographics of the population on the Island. The recommendations from the study were presented in order and included:

**FUNDING:**

\*Establish a fare revenue target, which can be implemented on a cost formula-based method or a flat rate method.

\*Broaden the funding base with a Ferry District, all properties would then help to pay for the ferry, would be used to supplement the ferry operating costs. This would help to stabilize the fares. Discussion and clarification of the fact that this would not raise taxes as our residents are already taxed at the maximum allowed. What it would mean is that taxes would be redistributed over more brackets and would mean that money would need to be pulled from the Parks Department, or the Library, or the Fire Department for example to account for the new tax bracket. Rich Sullivan comment: the tax district cannot be implemented until state law changes and it gets enacted by the county, however, it would help to stabilize fares.

\*Grow non-fare operating revenues: establish charter and lease rates for the second vessel, sell advertising on the ferry website, at terminals, and on the ferry, and seek concession opportunities at the Steilacoom terminal during peak season.

-Pat Owen: no other county ferry system has a second boat, and we can't afford it. We should lease out the second boat for additional revenue.

-Carol: other two options are peanuts for revenue generations.

- Elizabeth: Advertising wouldn't gain much revenue

\*Establish a fuel surcharge: The surcharge would be adjusted quarterly. It would also be shown separately on tickets.

-Buzz Thome: concern over where extra money would go if the surcharge generates extra money that isn't need for fuel costs.

-Pat Owen: we need to come to terms with how we are going to fund the ferry because we are going to be in trouble, we really do need to come up with something to alleviate this issue; reiterates this point that we have to make a change.

- Dave Albertson: rates affect ridership, even though ridership is going down, thinks seniors are getting screwed with the fares, 20% discount for regular commuter vehicle passes, but only 5% discount for seniors, no additional discount on buying multiple tickets; thinks that increasing discount for seniors would increase ridership.

-Carol Paschal: The surcharge wouldn't be to cover the whole increase of fuel costs, just a percentage.

## SERVICE

\*Modify the County's Level-of-Service: Short term service improvements: adding additional runs, one early morning, extending later run on Thursday's to Monday-Wednesday, summer two boat service, and new Ketron departure.

-Chris Frye: Rates are going up, if you want to pay for the ferry get more people to live on the Island. Need to get working families on the island. It only takes 23 people to pay for a new early morning run. We have to give the county a reason to invest in a R-10 community. We can't fight the fare until we have something to fight it with, more people living on and commuting from the Island. We need more people paying for the ferry during the week.

-Dave Albertson: This ferry is going down the tubes if we don't get more riders. We have to get more riders on the ferry long-term.

-Carol Paschal: questions if evening runs would improve the ridership or not.

-Pat Owen: would be good for families. Deb has brought up surcharge for high demand runs, commuter boats.

-Elizabeth Emerick: Working families won't necessarily have the ability to choose which run they want to take as it will be dictated by their work schedule. It would discourage families from moving to the island.

Chris Frye: This was intended to be targeted towards larger vehicles like truss company trucks, gravel trucks, RV's, etc. to help alleviate the congestion and free up space on heavily loaded morning runs.

## OPERATIONS

\*Technology Systems investments

-Buzz Thome: We've been trying to do that for three years. The company with the contract is so far behind that it will be longer than expected to get new scanners.

\*Evaluate potential for kiosk sales

Chris Frye: We used to have a kiosk here at the store.

Elizabeth Emerick: It didn't work, it never worked, it was always broken.

## FARE POLICY

\*Demand management: Increase summer surcharge, use two boat services, use reservations, gradually increase ration of vehicle fares to passenger fares, reduce the youth fare to 50% of full passenger fare.

-Pat Owen: It wouldn't increase revenue, island residents would have to pay more as well.

-Elizabeth Emerick: It would help to increase revenue, and it wouldn't impact residents if you buy the commuter passes.

\*Add small car category

-Dave Albertson: It would allow for more cars to fit on the ferry if more people make a conscious effort to use smaller cars. This is a long term issue.

-Chris Frye: I don't think any one recommendation stands on its own.

\*Offer household accounts

-Chris Frye: Could allow for discounts based on frequency of use of the ferry

\*Introduce a monthly passenger pass

-Chris Frye: Something that other places have been using but we haven't had the technology for. Reiterates that no one recommendation is going to work on its own.

-Carol Paschal: agrees that multiple recommendations are needed to address the issue

## FACILITIES

\*Align transit and ferry schedules

\*Improve signage

\*Establish formal drop off/pick up procedure

## GENERAL DISCUSSION

-Carol Paschal: Our zoning of such is that businesses have a hard time making it out here. May seem off the point but it is all part of having a viable community. Perhaps we've gone to far with our zoning restrictions.

-Pat Owen: Agrees with the zoning issue, and the no growth mentality on the island has contributed to this issue.

-Chris Frye: Quotes comments from Deb Wallace included in the study results. Asks Doug Richardson if it is worth the council to invest in our community. Riveria has the resources for a full small town. The next biggest issue to the ferry contributing to slow growth is the internet. Fix these and a majority of the issues affecting growth would be gone.

-Doug Richardson: Addresses zoning issues brought up. Change would need to happen at the state legislature level. Budgets are decided by the council, not the ferry administrator. There are several items that keep the Island as rural, such no sewer, etc. AICAB needs to weigh in on all the recommendations.

-Dave Albertson: Can't look at these options in terms of six month trials. You probably aren't going to get the results you want in six months.

-Chris Frye: Does it matter if recommendations are lumped together or should they be separately.

-Carol Paschal: We should prioritize them maybe.

- Chris Frye: We need to do this now, the study is fresh, and people are thinking about, I think we should vote.
- Dave Albertson: Feels uncomfortable making a vote now
- Rich Sullivan: Agrees with Dave Albertson
- Carol Paschal: Let's have a comment period.

**Issues and Comments from the Floor: -**

- Ann Dasch: fare revenue peaked in 2007 we just caught up with that revenue this year.
- Lee Schauf: No public transportation to address increasing the walk-ons. 50% difference for youth fare would have minimal impact.
- Ann Dasch: need to address service improvement for full time residents instead of making it easier for vacationers. Quality of life has declined due to the policy changes in the past and will continue to decline if we don't make changes; we need to incorporate new policy changes to address this. Wants increased service hours, early boat and late boat recommendations, to be implemented sooner rather than later. Now before the summer season starts, before the summer real estate market is over, etc.
- Ben Harter: At what point do we go to the business management team, and bring up their mismanagement. The first boat is often late, paying more for less service, we need to make the county more accountable.
- Dave Albertson: Points out that we are strictly an advisory board and we do not make the decisions.
- Ben Harter: county mismanaging funds and operations.
- Eve Whittle: thinks tourism should be promoted and wants the commuter tickets to have a longer expiration date.
- Nori H.: thinks WTS is one sided and unintelligent, why was the parking situation not addressed. Thinks we need to redo the study including redoing study to include management.
- New resident Brent: need both early morning and evening run implemented before the summer season to demonstrate the ability of working families to live here and commute.
- Carol Paschal: we're planning to have more frequent meetings until we get this issue resolved. Will probably have another meeting in one month
- Dave Albertson: we could do another meeting sooner too
- Iris Mohr: administrative expenses have been skyrocketing, no mention of how to run the administrative side more efficiently.

**Announcements and Adjournment:**

Meeting adjourned at 8:57pm