

**Boat Access Committee Meeting**  
**Sunday October 10, 2021 6:30 to 8 PM via Zoom**

**PRESENT**

Chris Immer (Chair), Mary Ross, Larry Roteman, Alan Krum, Tim Robison, Dave Perry, Nick Kluge, Christine Greene, Jeff Haggen, Paul Davis, Lane Coury. (Notes taken by Lane Coury.)

**LINKS TO RESOURCES**

- [Recording of the Oct 10 Zoom meeting](#) (90 minutes)
- [The Public Dock Committee web page](#) with links to documents and related references
- [Get Er Done](#) checklist summarizing high level steps to move ahead on planning process
- [LIFAC agendas and meeting notes](#) including analysis and recommendations from Spring/Summer 2018 for the replacement ferry

**AGENDA ITEMS AND RELATED DISCUSSION**

**1. Confirm Committee name and purpose with committee.**

**Committee Name:**

Public Dock Committee

List of Public Dock Committee members was updated to include: Chris Immer (Chair), Mary Ross (LICA Board member), Larry Roteman, Alan Krum, Tim Robison, Dave Perry, Nick Kluge, Christine Greene, Jeff Haggen, Judy Thomas, Lane Coury

Others are interested and may attend meetings without having a formal committee role.

**Committee Purpose:**

Refer to Agenda Item #3 for a summary statement.

Committee discussed long term desire to have a public dock as a long term solution, but also need to address short term, interim solution(s).

The committee discussed making it clear that other initiatives like Aiston Preserve are not going to resolve the need for a public dock. The Parks & Rec Dept is funding installation of mooring balls, but there is no current plan to build a launch ramp for public use. (For more on Aiston Preserve development, refer to the [Lummi Island Heritage Trust site](#).)

**2. Establish what the dock will look like and how we get there. (#4 on Get er Done checklist.)**

The committee is targeting the Lummi Island Beach Access park, owned by the Parks & Rec Dept, as the most likely candidate for a public dock. Refer to [Ferry Map](#) for current ownership according to Whatcom County Tax Assessor maps.

Chris points out that the old pilings from the previous ferry dock are left behind at this site. (Refer to picture on [committee webpage](#) showing the old and new ferry docks.) This indicates a precedent for having a dock there.

The most likely structure would be a pier going out into deeper water and connecting a ramp to a floating dock. This would involve a long pier to get into deep enough water. Local knowledge and experience from any engineering firms will be critical.

A new public dock is intended for load and unload, not for overnight stays. This needs to be marked clearly. Parks & Rec probably has guidelines for short term stay vs overnight, so committee will research other examples.

Suggestions for researching other islands and their public docks:

- Sinclair Island in Skagit County has a proposal to check for ideas ([download their draft document here](#)).
- James Island has a dock suspended by piers as their permanent structure.
- See if we can get a list of other public docks from Parks & Rec Dept

### **Next Steps for This Task**

We all agreed that filling in full details for “what it will look like” is a big task, not easily done in one meeting. Committee decided to start putting together a very drafty version of a proposal.

This process allows committee members to brainstorm individually, then capture ideas to build on. After we have more input, then we can consolidate similar ideas.

*\* Refer to recent email from Alan K with a link to a shareable doc all committee members can edit. Or email your thoughts to the committee using “reply all”.*

Initial thoughts on what should be included:

- Discuss best ways to partner with Parks & Rec Dept
- Include pros and cons of potential solutions – helps remind us to consider different viewpoints and acknowledge that no one solution will satisfy all objectives equally
- Address the need for “urgent” public access versus “emergency” response

### **3. Draft a statement answering why we want this (#5 on *Get Er Done* checklist).**

***DRAFT STATEMENT:*** *This committee will investigate working with Whatcom County Parks and Recreation Department to establish a public dock that provides recreational boat access to and from the island.*

### **4. Discuss what the ongoing care would look like (#7 on *Get Er Done* checklist).**

It sounds like the Parks & Dept expects Lummi Island to have a role and be responsible for some aspects of ongoing care, to be clarified. Committee suggested several possibilities:

- Security – how to handle abandoned boats
- Maintenance – how to handle trash, how often the structure gets painted and who is responsible, etc.
- Parking – for the existing ferry terminal, Lummi Island took on maintenance such as mowing, adding an orchard, etc. Look at this as an example.
- Access to facilities (like bathrooms) at Ferry Terminal. At some point, we may need to address this as we get more detailed.

Local improvement district is one way that other communities have helped fund efforts like Bellingham’s “100 Acre Wood”, according to Jeff H. He will investigate how that process worked.

## 5. Discussing emergent needs with Ferry advisory committee.

Lummi Ferry Advisory Committee (LIFAC) has a good relationship with Whatcom County, so the committee agrees to pursue ways to work with them effectively.

Point out concern about potential for increasing ferry outages until the new ferry is implemented. Waiting for 24-hour county replacement service seems insufficient for urgent access needs.

Discussed possibility of negotiating with the county to provide faster response – at least provide a landing craft to move people and even vehicles during an outage. Or get us a passenger ferry within 3 to 5 hours, for example. Guemes Island in Skagit County appears to have a much better response time than Lummi.

### **Other Potential Interim Solutions**

Can some changes be made to the existing ramp at the ferry dock without waiting for the new ferry. This would allow implementation of improvements or alternate solutions.

At a minimum, can steps be built down to the ferry terminal on the northwest side for access via a landing craft.

*Short term proposal:* Chris points out that the passenger gangway sitting in the parking lot might be used if a crane with a winch was built out from the existing ferry dock. This would be for emergency use by the fire department. Passengers could then load onto a boat that is not a landing craft.

Discussed several other thoughts:

- Work on an “official” list of people with boats who could respond to an urgent need
- Might need to have a more formalized arrangement for landing a boat on the mainland (to be discussed with the Lummi Nation).