

Boat Access Committee Meeting
Sunday October 17, 2021 6:30 to 8:15 PM via Zoom

PRESENT

Chris Immer (Chair), Mary Ross, Tim Robison, Dave Perry, Nick Kluge, Alan Krum, Jeff Hagen, Lane Coury.
(Notes taken by Lane Coury.)

LINKS TO RESOURCES

- [Recording of the Oct 17 Zoom meeting](#) (recording starts at about 7PM and is approx 60 mins)
- [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 recording of 10/12/21 meeting](#) helpful to listen, especially at about 45 minutes in where Rich Hudson discussed emergency dock access plans for the new ferry

AGENDA ITEMS AND RELATED DISCUSSION

1. SHARING OF INFORMATION GATHERED BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Update on research on other islands and their ferry service – Mary Ross

Mary had a phone call with Captain Rachael Rowe, Ferry Operations Division Manager from Skagit County Public Works.

Discussed service to Guemes Island: Goal is 2 to 3 hours to deploy passenger-only ferry service during an outage. [Arrow Launch Service](#) is their provider, who specialize in servicing boats in Puget Sound. The stern is high off the water– they lower the ferry dock apron, then have a ramp to connect for passenger access. Even with smooth condition, this is a pretty challenging (even “scary”) transition.

Mary’s thoughts – called Arrow to see if they provide quotes for service. Maybe get someone from Whatcom Co to follow up. Rachel says that both Skagit and Whatcom have a challenge, because the 2 major providers (Arrow in Skagit and San Juan Cruises in Whatcom also has a service) have an informal non-compete agreement and will not bid against each other.

Rachel also says that the Guemes ferry is being replaced and it would make sense **if** Skagit and Whatcom Counties had a mutual agreement to keep ONE of the retired ferries as back up to share. Maybe even add San Juan County to a tri-county agreement. Mary has heard this discussed several years ago when a Washington State ferry was for sale. As far as we know, this idea has not been pursued.

Task (Mary and others as available) – go visit Rachel at Skagit County to interview her and learn more about how they handle similar challenges.

Update on Keeping Track of Committee Actions and Status – Lane Coury

Discussed suggestion for breaking committee efforts into a two-phase project:

- (1) develop plans for a public dock as a long term solution, with approximately 3 to 5 year horizon
- (2) develop interim solution(s) that address a need for better access in the meantime.

This allows the committee to break a large effort into assignable tasks and manageable steps for each.

Committee looked at the document that Lane emailed to committee members on 10/17/21 – which is now included in the Google doc, starting on page 6.

NOTE: Anyone from the committee can use the blue cross (**Add Comment**) feature to add notes, questions, etc. or you can edit the document directly. Contact Alan K or Lane C if you need help accessing or editing the shared document.

***Follow up needed:** Committee should discuss whether to revise committee purpose statement to include long term and interim goals. Add item to 10/24/21 committee agenda.*

Update on reaching out to LIFAC ([view recorded LIFAC 10/12/21 meeting here](#))

Mary R was able to use the 3 minute public speaker slot to discuss her experience. She presented the statements posted in the Google doc, page 2.

Members from the Public Dock Committee who listened to the LIFAC meeting doubt that the Public Works Dept. will offer much support for implementing an interim plan. However, the LIFAC report in the November *Tome* newsletter did say: "LIFAC will continue to assess possible improvements to emergency planning".

*Task (unassigned – discuss at next committee meeting): Reach out to LIFAC and schedule someone from the committee to give a short presentation on our efforts so far. Will probably be important to reiterate focus on **URGENT** access which is not currently addressed by LIFAC, as far as we can tell.*

2a. DISCUSSION OF WHAT ALTERNATE INTERIM SOLUTION(S) MIGHT LOOK LIKE (ITEM NUMBER #4)

Chris presented initial ideas for using a boat as a boat access platform that could be anchored to a mooring ball.

Rough details: Chris believes that we might get a donation of a hull from a reef net boat. This could theoretically use a crane or hydraulic lift to deploy a ramp for access. More discussion and diagrams are needed to show how this might work.

Beginning list of factors to consider: where/how boat would be anchored; where/how people could get to the ramp and/or whether stairs would be needed; how/by whom such a "boat" would be registered, licensed, and taxed; how to maintain separation from the ferry terminal to prevent interference with operations or inspections; extremes of tidal range; potential use of the Lummi Island Access Beach to be discussed with Parks & Rec; where/how to store the boat platform when not in use, etc.

Task (Chris) - Chris will prepare draw a picture/diagram of a ramp for committee to discuss at the next meeting.

Task (Alan) - will see about contacting a mechanical engineer on the island. If this solution seems feasible, the committee would need more detailed diagrams.

Alan asks if anyone has a portable depth sounder with a chart marker. This might be used by the committee to conduct an informal study of the area in front of the Lummi Island Access Beach.

Task (unassigned) - several members to see if they have tools available for this purpose and coordinate for next steps.

2b. FURTHER DISCUSSION OF WHAT THE PIER/DOCK MIGHT LOOK LIKE (ITEM NUMBER #4)

Update on research into feasibility of building a public dock - Chris Immer

Chris reached out to a number of marine engineering companies. Bayside Construction got back in touch and Gary can come out and look at the site. Gary is familiar with the island and where the old ferry was.

There is a possibility that the remains of the existing pilings MAY be re-usable. Capt. Gary Pool says they were broken off and left in place because they could not be removed.

When Chris schedules a meeting, any interested committee members can join the discussion and site visit. This will give us a much better idea about what steps are next to evaluate this project.

Task (Mary) – can someone research historic drawings to help us learn more about the structure design.

NOTE: There MIGHT be some archived blueprints at the library for the NEW dock dolphins. Suggest asking Paul Davis if he knows where to find them.

Question about alternatives to funding

As we move along the planning process, we may need to research organizations with funding. Notice several listed in the proposals from Point Roberts and Sinclair:

- Boating Facilities Program Grant – check BoatUS Foundation. Dave P will check.
- Washington State Recreational Conservation Funding

Briefly discussed best way to collect research on different structures – no one of the committee members has all the knowledge.

Considered following up with Teri Terri at Parks & Rec to get more ideas about what we do next. Suggestion was made to wait to talk to Teri Terri until at least one marine engineering firm visits the island to give us a preliminary evaluation of feasibility.

3. LISTING OF WHAT OUR NEXT STEPS ARE. WHO IS DOING WHAT?

Refer to tasks in above notes, marked in red.