

**Boat Access Committee Meeting**  
**Sunday October 31, 2021 6:30 to 8:00 PM via Zoom**

**PRESENT**

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

**LINKS TO RESOURCES**

- [Recording of the Oct 31 Zoom meeting](#) (recording starts at 6:30PM and is approx 90 mins)
- [The Public Dock Committee web page](#) with links to documents and related references. (To find this page, go to [OurLummiIsland.org](#) > Community > Committees & Research > Public Doc Committee)
- Committee document on Google docs (*check for an email invitation from Alan K*). This is a dynamic file that allows us to maintain a running dialog for internal committee discussion, capture suggestions and input from committee members, and helps us keep up with committee progress and task status.

**AGENDA ITEMS AND RELATED DISCUSSION**

**Member Questions and Discussion**

***How does the committee get the Lummi Island Fire Department more involved?***

The LIFD commissioners would need to get behind the whole PDC process.

***Task (Chris Immer):*** will attend the LIFD commissioners' meeting later in November to request their support.

***How did everyone handle the recent ferry outages?***

Mary was caught by both ferry outages last week, so had first person experience to share. She was in her car and observed from the mainland on Monday. Whatcom County Public Works staff came on scene, but did not have any updates in person. Signage appeared at 2pm or so. Mary tried to answer questions by others waiting for the ferry and trying to figure out parking, ferry status, etc. Good reminder that not ALL islanders have smartphones or access to Twitter, NextDoor, etc.

***Task (all):*** Committee members can help islanders figure out how to get text alerts about ferry status, a fairly low-tech action. See notes on page 4.

***Additional thoughts on engaging with LIFAC/Public Works?***

Discussed whether islanders can be more assertive about engaging the county. Alan points out that Public Works seems to be responding to some pressure because they certainly did better at real time updates this time. Chris Immer raised possibility of getting a petition signed by a majority of islanders to request immediate attention for a public dock. Deliver petition to LIFAC to pass on to the county. These concerns should become part of the county's public record.

Tim R advises that this committee not get sidetracked on chasing down Public Works. The county commissioners would need to drive that whole commitment to bring about any change. Alan says that the county does check the LICA page and gives Alan feedback on it.

**Action to discuss further:** Should committee (1) spearhead an island petition (2) suggest to LIFAC that they talk with the county about its response process and recommend several improvements.

### ***Should we open committee meetings to the public?***

Mary has been hearing from islanders who are very interested in committee progress. Reed Johnson (GM from The Willows) told her that he would like to be involved with this project. He and family with a 5-day old baby got stuck during the last outage, so that raised his level of concern.

Generally, committee response is tentative because we are trying to move reasonably quickly and we are concerned that a large group will slow down decision-making. We discussed ways to enable observer-type attendees who could be muted.

**Committee Decision** – for now, meet as Executive Committee every week and have one open *monthly* meeting. That gives us a forum to share our documents, resources, and topics we have discussed so far. One suggested format would be like a monthly Q&A session that is a drop in.

### ***When should we schedule the first public meeting?***

*To share any progress on an interim solution for temporary access:* For the reef net boat – do not go forward to discuss next steps, fundraising, etc. in a public meeting until we have an engineer design that shows feasibility and gives a better idea of the structural requirements, permit requirements, etc. Mary suggests that at least investigate alternatives to reef net boat before discussing this publicly.

*To discuss a permanent public dock:* Wait until we have input from a qualified engineer to discuss the feasibility of building a permanent public dock at the Lummi Island Beach Access park.

## **Members report on task progress**

### **Discuss engineering drawings or maps**

Follow up earlier discussion on getting depth sonar drawings of the old dock that would show where those pilings are. This would require a system that draws a contour of the ocean floor, which an engineering firm would do.

In the meantime, Alan asks if there is a way for us to draw this ourselves and give it to an engineering firm to prepare them to come out and be better informed?

Tim R says that to prepare even a rough diagram, is fairly complicated. He feels that step 1 is to get an engineer to give us just enough feedback to believe that a public dock could be built. That is what we need to get an informed conversation going with Parks & Rec.

One other example to look at is an eel grass survey from maintenance done on the existing ferry terminal. Look [on LICA website to show historical surveys](#) as reference.

### **Discuss possible use of EZ Dock**

Tim R's experience with EZ Dock suggests that this solution is only viable for very calm conditions. He also questions the endurance of the material. As for accessibility, it looks like there is a high demand for balance, there are no handrails, etc.

Mary pointed out that even the floats for the passenger ferry at the Gooseberry Point ferry terminal had water flowing over them during the rough conditions on Monday, Oct. 18.

### **Discuss potential funding sources**

Dave P shared info on **Boaters Rec Meeting**. Check his updated notes and links in the Google doc under the topic Research Funding Sources – Recreational Boaters Association of Washington (RBAW).

### **Chris Immer updates**

Hopes to meet with engineer on the island on Monday (Nov 1) afternoon.

John Granger will continue working with family members to get agreement for using their land to store a reef net boat. The adjacent property is not as ideal, but the owner is open to suggestion. Chris continues the dialog.

Christine Green offers her dock as an alternative access point, but it is on the northeast end of the island and adds more time to transport people.

### **Discussion on reef net boat cost**

[Excel doc with estimates](#) provided by Chris Immer – very rough idea but approx \$32,000 so far.

Chris asks – is it time to ask islanders if they are interested (would want to pay for/invest in?) a shorter term solution like the reef net boat.

Discussed whether pursuing an interim solution would compromise our relationship with the county because it seems as if we are trying to embarrass them by raising the issue.

Some mixed feelings here – we hear the county response and it is not warm and fuzzy. Public Works expects all interactions to go through LIFAC. Todd Donovan (County Council member) is on LIFAC and he is the liaison with the county council. So we may get the impression that Public Works does not want to work with Lummi Island, but this goes beyond Public Works.

### **Updates on interim project progress**

Tim R suggests that if we involve a naval architect to review any design, we can expect them to be super conservative and will have very high standards. Actual design doc and engineering drawings would be involved, anticipate a very expensive process.

Alan K – will put out a call for volunteer structural engineers from the island to give us a sanity check. Highest priority to look at the ramp and confirm its integrity. Chris has a contact that may work.

Discussed whether we should continue pursuing an interim solution of using a temporary floating dock structure with an attached ramp. The next step would be to get a structural engineer (at a minimum) to look at feasibility.

**Committee Decision:** Send email to all those who have expressed interest in serving on the committee in some capacity. Ask if you want to go down this route. Vote yes/no.

### **Suggestion for work on a deployment plan**

*Task (Lane) – begin very high level outline of possible deployment stages, following the model of the [National Incident Management System used by FEMA](#). Begin to identify potential resources on the island and mainland that might be involved in a response to a ferry outage.*

### Steps to sign up for text alerts about Lummi Island ferry status:

1. Go to <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/list.aspx#>
2. Enter your email FIRST so you can see an option to enter your phone number. This will allow you to request text alerts **and/or** email alerts.
3. Scroll way down to **News Flash** section —> use the right arrowhead next to a heading to collapse/hide lists of no interest. The listings are alphabetical.
4. look through the alphabetical list to find Public Works-Lummi Island Ferry.
5. Click the **phone icon** to enable text messages.
6. Look for  that shows success.
7. *Last step:* You will get a county text shortly afterwards to confirm. You need to respond if you want to activate text alerts.