



San Juan County Council

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District 1, Christine Minney
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District 3, Jane Fuller

SAN JUAN COUNTY FERRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE Wednesday February 15, 2023 – Meeting Minutes – (draft) Small Conference Room, 55 Second St., Friday Harbor

9:00 am The meeting was called to order the previous co-chair of the FAC Ken Burtness

In attendance: Committee members - Ken Burtness, Jennifer Swanson, Justin Paulson, Jane Fuller; Shaw Island terminal agent Steve Mason joined the call mid-way through the meeting.

- Interim Chair – Ken Burtness will serve as interim chair until such time as the San Juan Island seat is filled after which the committee will vote to elect a new Chair. As Ken was already a co-chair of the FAC there was no need for a vote.
- Interim Secretary – it was agreed that the role of secretary will rotate among members until the San Juan Island seat is filled then an election can take place.
- The San Juan Island seat will be advertised so members of the public can apply to be on the committee.

Public access time was held.

WSF update– Rachel Dean & John Vezina

- Hadley Rodero who works under John Vezina and is the supervisor of Rachel Dean will be attending our FAC meetings going forward.
- Ferries 101 – presentation by Rachel Dean providing an overview of the WSF system and services.
- The RFI for vendors to respond to was issued February 10.
- Ferries will be pulled from the system to undergo hybrid conversion. The first one, the Wenatchee, will be pulled out in September / October of 2023, then one each year for the next 2 years.
- Grants will be obtained from the federal government to install shoreside electrification for hybrid ferries.
- Rachel Dean requested additional time at our next meeting to go over the community outreach plans for the schedule re-write exercise.
- A service restoration plan update will be provided soon.
- Of the 21 vessels currently in service, 3 are very old. None will be replaced for 3.5 years. Two of the three are on the SJC route.

October 6, 2025

- Challenges with crewing the interisland ferry is getting crew to FH which is more challenging than getting crew to Anacortes.
- There is a policy bill on workforce development and vessel building. WSF fully supports what is in the Governor's budget - \$18 m. for more workforce development.
- Medical preference program is to be updated. Not aware of any changes to the reservations system for these. The wording in the RCW is that there are not reservations allowed for medical priorities coming to the islands.
- WSF (John) stated they could be communicating things to the terminals more clearly and consistently.
- Northsound (Anacortes) terminal manager – Jules Schultz has been in the job two months. The goal is to re-establish a terminal working group.

Minutes from the previous meeting - approved by the Committee.

Island Updates:

- Orcas – cars with reservations have been left at the dock; a ferry worker was hit by a car; commercial customers are asking about reservations.
- Lopez / Shaw – getting left behind in Anacortes – it is an equity issue that needs to be addressed – space should be kept open for cars to these islands. Could be related to lack of training and oversight – too much discretion allowed to be exercised by the crew.

Commercial rep on the FAC – Justin offered to help with this now that Pat is no longer on the committee. He will liaise with commercial entities across the county to gather their input on the ferries month to month.

SJC FAC Charter – Chapter 2.44 (County Code) / SJC Volunteer Advisory Committees – Chapter 2.116 (County Code) / Code of Conduct for Volunteer Committees, Commissions and Boards:

- The council liaison update was used to explain why three members of the FAC were asked to step down.
- Need to ensure that a member of the FAC can represent frequent ferry user groups including tourism operators.
- Recommended that everyone familiarize themselves with the RCW and county codes governing the FAC.
- If there is the opportunity for members to do OPMA training that could be offered.
- Robert's rules of order can be found online if any members want to refresh themselves on those.

Going forward – establish a one-year workplan with priorities that the committee will work on and that could be made public. Committee members asked to provide the Chair with priorities they would like the FAC to focus on for the coming months.

Next meeting to be held on March 8, 2023 @ 9 am.

Meeting adjourned at 11 am.