

Rachel Rowe

From: Ferry Comments
Sent: Thursday, April 23, 2020 8:30 AM
To: 'Carol Steffy'; Ferry Comments
Cc: Commissioners
Subject: RE: Draft 2020 Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report

Thank you for your comments. We will take them under advisement.

From: Carol Steffy [mailto:islarts75@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 12:04 PM
To: Ferry Comments <ferrycomments@co.skagit.wa.us>
Subject: Draft 2020 Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report

Commissioners,

Please put a stop to allowing visitors to Guemes island, using our ferry during the "stay at home outage" and putting the island population, ferry crew, kids in danger from bringing the virus possibilities up here. We don't live in Seattle or any other big city to be safer, healthier and be retired in a lovely community.

Please help us maintain our safety like San Juan island has.

Carol Steffy
7027 Holiday Blvd
Anacortes, Wa 98221

This address is Guemes island I have now stayed on the island for going on seven weeks without leaving; I'd love to see my kids in Seattle or have them come up here but for the safety of everyone have asked that they stay home to protect both my grandchildren and the residents of Guemes island.

Rachel Rowe

From: Ferry Comments
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 12:59 PM
To: 'Stephen Orsini'; Ferry Comments
Cc: Commissioners; Dahlstrom Dennis; Commissioners; Dan Berentson; Paul A. Randall-Grutter; Trisha Logue
Subject: RE: Draft 2020 Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report
Attachments: Skagit County 2020 Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report.pdf

Mr. Orsini,

Thank you for your comments and questions in your emails dated April 10 (included below for ease of reference); please see Skagit County's responses.

Sincerely,
Captain Rachel Rowe
Ferry Operations Division Manager
Guemes Island Ferry
500 I Ave. Anacortes, WA 98221
Direct: (360) 416-1466
Cell: (360) 333-1496

From: Stephen Orsini [mailto:sailingorsini@gmail.com]

Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 12:19 PM

To: Ferry Comments <ferrycomments@co.skagit.wa.us>

Cc: Commissioners <commissioners@co.skagit.wa.us>; Dahlstrom Dennis <dddahls@msn.com>; Commissioners <commissioners@co.skagit.wa.us>

Subject: Draft 2020 Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report

Thank you for making this year's Draft annual report available in a timely manner and for providing information on the cost of O&M for 2019.

I also want to compliment Skagit County Public Works for keeping the Skagit County Transfer Station operational and collecting fees during this corona virus pandemic. It is worth noting that Skagit County Public Works has implemented a no-cash policy at the Transfer Station. As I wrote in a previous communication, I hope that Management of the Guemes Ferry will implement a cashless policy when updating the ticketing system for the Guemes Ferry. As a scanner-based ticketing system has been created for Pierce County, such a system could allow for maximum social distancing to protect the purser and ensure that fees could still be collected on the Guemes Ferry in times of continued pandemic. The annual cost estimate given by Berk and KPFF for an updated ticketing system was about \$100,000 but the cost quoted from American Eagle, the software/ticketing specialists who created the Pierce County system, was \$50,000.

Skagit County response: Please note, Skagit County did not obtain a formal quote from American Eagle for a software/ticketing solution. Effective May 5, cash will not be accepted as payment at the Guemes Island Ferry.

1. Obj 540- Services & Pass Through Payments: This category receives no mention in the Comments Section of the report. Haul-out costs are usually under line item 4810, Repairs & Maintenance. One might assume, given the amount of costs for the consulting services of Berk, KPFF and others in 2019, that this large expense of \$1,577,561.50 is generated primarily from consulting fees. Given the definitions of operation and maintenance used by the State of Washington, the inclusion of this one-time large amount appears inconsistent with the definitions of usual annual O&M costs. Is it correct to include such an unusual fee as O&M for the vessel? If this expense was accounted for in a different manner, not as O&M, would fare box revenue have exceeded the target for 2019? Not least in consideration of the 15% fare increase should be the effects of the corona virus shut down on the incomes of resident islanders. The County should seriously

consider delay of fare increases in 2020 especially as it expects to obtain loans and grants to cover the cost of lost revenue due to the corona virus.

With regard to Comment 1, you also sent the following clarification:

“I wish to clarify some of my comments in Item 1. under the Comments section in today’s previous email on the topic of the 2020 Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report.

I understand that OBJ 540 is the total role-up of the numbered line items below it. So the categories below are an explanation of what is in the amount of \$1,577,561.50. What I am concerned about is that consultant fees as paid to say KPFF/Berk may be included in this entire category. For example, item 4110 is "Professional services provided by outside consultants." Should that amount, \$256,208.27 actually be part of annual O&M? And the question still stands, “If this expense was accounted for in a different manner, not as O&M, would fare box revenue have exceeded the target for 2019?”

My apologies for the potentially confusing wording in today’s previous email on this Item 1 under my Comments section.”

Skagit County response to Comment 1:

The Consultant fees of \$256,208.27 are not for BERK/KPFF alone. The work BERK and KPFF did for the operations analysis was less than \$100,000 of that amount. The remainder was for services provided by our marine engineering firm to perform an expanded vessel survey as requested by the Ferry Committee, other work associated with the 2019 haul-out and design work for future ferry maintenance projects. All of these costs are considered O&M expenditures.

The 2019 revenue target was calculated as per the governing [Resolution R20100050](#), amended by [Resolution R20110382](#), utilizing the 5-year average of O&M expenditures for the years 2014-2018; therefore, only expenditures in those years affected the 2019 revenue target and whether or not 2019 fare box revenue missed or exceeded the target. All 2019 O&M expenditures are included in calculating the 2020 revenue target.

Public Works is not recommending a fare increase because of the COVID-19 situation. The ferry fare revenue target report is drafted each year during the same time, which happened to be during a pandemic this year. Public Works is recommending a fare increase because the fare box revenue missed the revenue target in 2018 and in 2019. We did not recommend a fare increase in 2019 because we were sensitive to the fact that the surcharge had taken effect the prior year and 2018 fare box revenue missed the target by \$50,000.

2. **Table 9:** The amount of the surcharge, \$2.50 per ticket, is exempted from the rationale and definitions of R20110382, yet it represented a substantial increase in fares when implemented some two years ago and is incorporated into the base of the ticket price increase of 15%. So while it is exempted from revenue to offset O&M it is included in the 15% increase calculation for the actual ticket amount. (The counter-argument to this inclusion could be that it helps the rate payer, otherwise the increase will be more. This argument does not, however, address the duplicity in the accounting.) In total, the fare increases for the ridership on the Guemes Ferry exceed by a substantial amount any inflation index used in the US economy up to the outbreak of the corona virus pandemic.

Skagit County response to Comment 2:

The vessel replacement surcharge is a set amount of each ticket sale per [Resolution R20180123](#). For the purposes of the report, the 15 percent increase recommended by Public Works is equivalent to 15 percent of the published ticket price. We clarified this on page 7 of the final report (attached). Appendix F of the report shows the proposed increase in dollar amounts. When we present the fare increase proposal to the Board of County Commissioners, we are happy to also show the percent increase based on the ticket price excluding the surcharge.

With regard to your comment about inflation, the revenue target methodology that we must follow when we calculate the revenue target is not tied to inflation.

3. The \$2.50 Surcharge: The amount of this surcharge remains significantly higher than that charged in any other ferry system in Washington. The capital surcharge on the Washington State Ferry system is 25 cents. The amount of the surcharge on the Guemes Ferry was set, not by the accepted calculation based on vessel replacement over its expected life, but as an outcome of the CRAB loan application to address the requirement for the County to show matching funds (the “skin in the game” concept.) There were two components proposed to get the total \$10.0 million available: the ticket surcharge designed to raise about \$250,000 per year and a property tax on Guemes Island only designed to raise another \$250,000 annually. (The property tax proposal was dropped, at the last minute, which reduced the eligible amount to \$7.5 million.) It is appropriate to investigate the amount of the Guemes surcharge according to more usual accounting and vessel replacement methods.

Skagit County response to Comment 3:

The vessel replacement surcharge was implemented in accordance with [RCW 36.54.200](#), which states that the surcharge must be at least equal to the surcharge amount in the Washington State ferry fares. The governing RCW does not set a cap on the surcharge, not does it dictate how an agency is to calculate a surcharge.

4. Cost Reduction: Although cost reductions have been mentioned over the years, they never seem to be achieved. In proposing a scanner-based ticketing system, and removing cash payments from the system, which has been accomplished in another County essential service, the Guemes Ferry system should be able to remove the 9:00 AM-5:00PM Mid-Watch which was added at a substantial cost, but has had little impact on car and driver through-put. Its impact on on-time sailings has not been published.

Skagit County response to Comment 4:

The mid-watch is not designed to increase throughput; the mid-watch allows tickets to be sold/validated on the Anacortes side while the vessel is in transit.

Your concern about the cost of the mid-watch is noted; however, the implementation of a scanner-based ticketing system does not necessarily mean the removal of the mid-watch. You mentioned a ticketing system implemented by Pierce County from American Eagle. That system actually increased their staffing needs, and they added one full-time employee who handles the scanning of tickets.

In order to remove the mid-watch, Skagit County would have to automate the entire process and install costly infrastructure (weather-proof/insulated structures, with power and internet access, to house self-scanners or cameras, automated gates to allow access after each scan for both walk-ons and potentially vehicles, ticket kiosks for customers without the ability to electronically purchase their tickets, etc.). [BERK & KPFF's work on ticketing solutions](#), presented to the Guemes Island Ferry Committee on Oct. 3, 2019, informed us that the annual operating and maintenance cost of 3 tickets kiosks is estimated at \$30,000 to \$90,000 per year. In addition, there is an estimated 5 percent fare revenue share for the electronic online/mobile app or smartcard solutions, which equates to roughly \$58,632 based on 2019 fare box revenue. Based on rough cost estimates, a fully automated system could cost anywhere between \$88,632 and \$148,632 annually to operate. These figures do not include the upfront capital cost for infrastructure or credit card transaction fees. The 2019 cost of the mid-watch was \$72,713, or approximately 0.057 percent of total salaries and benefits expenditures shown in Appendix D of the report.

In a survey recently published at <https://www.publicinput.com/N602>, when asked if people are willing to pay up to \$0.75 more per walk-on ticket and up to \$2.00 more per car and driver ticket, 36 percent of respondents said they would not use online ticketing even if it was free. 49 percent of respondents said they would use online ticketing, but did not want to pay that much for it. Skagit County will carefully evaluate the cost/benefit of any improved ticketing systems prior to moving forward with implementation.

A reduction in service has been mentioned in response to the corona virus pandemic including elimination of certain runs. These potential cost reductions should be presented. (The cost to schedule an 11:45 AM run in the Berk/KPFF study came in at over \$200,000 so deletion of lightly used runs at end of day, for example, should achieve substantial cost savings.) Implementation of a new ticketing system that does not remove the Mid-Watch will have failed in a major cost saving objective. A scanner-based, cash-less system will add an important level of safety for the crew now and in the future, especially if a frequent user bar code is placed in a non-opening window of a vehicle.

Skagit County response: A reduction in service due to the COVID-19 pandemic is a level of response that has been considered as a last-resort option in the event the virus infected crewmembers or contacts of crewmembers and we did not have enough staff to operate the vessel. We recognize that we transport essential workers to and from their home even on lightly-used runs.

With regard to the scanner-based ticketing system, please see Skagit County's response to Comment 4.

Thank you for your comments/questions. They have been added to the public record, along with the responses from Skagit County.



Guemes Island Ferry Committee

Allen Bush, Jr. Sandy Mckean Bud Ullman John Hopkins Dave Prewitt, Chair

April 21, 2020

Skagit County Public Works
Attn: Ferry Division
1800 Continental Place
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Re: Draft 2020 Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report

Dear Public Works and Ferry Division:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft 2020 Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report. There are five subjects that we believe deserve further attention.

1. The proposed 15 percent proposed fare increase has been applied to the current total fares, which includes the surcharge. The 15 percent increase should be calculated on the base rate, excluding the surcharge. By applying the 15 percent increase to the surcharge the proposal in effect raises the surcharge from \$2.00 to \$2.30. We think the increase should be calculated on the base rate.

Skagit County response to Comment 1:

The vessel replacement surcharge is a set amount of each ticket sale per [Resolution R20180123](#); therefore, it does not increase when fares increase. For the purposes of the report, the 15 percent increase recommended by Public Works is equivalent to 15 percent of the published ticket price. We clarified this in the final report (attached). Appendix F of the report shows the proposed increase in dollar amounts. When we present the fare increase proposal to the Board of County Commissioners, we are happy to also show the percent increase based on the ticket price excluding the surcharge.

2. The WSDOT deficit reimbursement is the smallest in dollar amount since 2009 and the lowest by percentage of total expenses since at least 2005. It is 6.6% for 2019 as compared to a ten-year average of over 15.9%. Moreover, this year's shrinkage is roughly the same as the revenue shortfall for 2019. We would like to know why the WSDOT contribution is so much reduced and whether this is a condition that is expected to continue.

*Skagit County response to Comment 2: In accordance with [Contract C20170245 between WSDOT and Skagit County](#), "WSDOT agrees to continue to reimburse the COUNTY for up to 50% of the previous year's annual operating deficit incurred in the operation and maintenance of the COUNTY ferry system." Through the deficit reimbursement program, \$1,800,000 per biennium is available to Pierce, Whatcom and Skagit Counties, or **up to** \$900,000 annually for the three counties. However, those funds are not split evenly; rather, the reimbursements are based on the operating deficits of each of the three counties. So, the calculation is not as simple as a predictable percentage of Skagit County's overall expenditures. In most cases, per Situation 2 on page 3 of the contract, Skagit County's share is calculated as follows:*

(Skagit County Deficit / Total Combined Deficits of Pierce, Skagit & Whatcom Counties) x ½ Biennial Amount Available

Therefore, without knowing what the other counties' deficits will be going forward, it would be impossible for us to predict what the deficit reimbursement will be going forward. Additionally, the current contract with WSDOT is in

effect until June 30, 2021. After that, a new contract will likely go in to effect (assuming the program is renewed for the next biennium); the terms of which are unknown at this time.

3. The Report is useful in underscoring the importance of having a clear understanding of how expenditures are categorized as either Capital or Operations & Maintenance because the calculation of shortfall in fare box revenue is a direct function of the O&M expenses. We appreciate that this annual Report, at page 6, begins to discuss this matter.

The discussion brings into focus a few questions, for example:

* The Report refers to an expenditure classified as capital, the ferry winch replacement project. Is that to say this was the only capital expense in 2019? Or is this just an example?

Skagit County response: Yes; this was the only capital expenditure in 2019.

* Is there no expense associated with the haulout and drydocking that is classified as capital?

Skagit County response: Correct; there were no expenditures that were defined as capital during the 2019 haul-out and dry dock period.

* Two consultants have recommended work they described as necessary to extend the life of the vessel. For example Elliott Bay Design Group listed as life extending improvements replacing engine foundations, updating navigation electronics, and refurbishing piping systems. Since “substantially extending the life of the vessel” is the description of capital at WAC 136-400-030, it seems again that the distinction between capital and O&M needs clarification.

Skagit County response: Consultants do not define capital versus maintenance expenditures. As you mention, there are governing laws and codes that set those definitions. WAC 136-400-030 defines “major vessel refurbishments that substantially extend the life the vessel” as a ferry capital improvement project. We have completed the items you mention above over a period of years as they have become necessary, but not as a part of a major capital vessel refurbishment project and not with the intent of extending the life of the vessel. The last major vessel refurbishment project was in 2005 when a re-power occurred.

Again, we appreciate the Report’s progress in addressing this important distinction, and we are anxious to discuss this with you.

4. Over the past ten years passenger and vehicle traffic on the ferry has remained fairly steady or has in fact declined a bit. At the same time, expenses and fares have risen significantly, even when adjusted for inflation. So we are delivering the same service at increased expense and ticket price. This should be examined in the Report so we can collectively understand our situation as regards fare increases like that proposed in the Report.

Skagit County response: As you know, fewer riders doesn’t mean the system costs less to operate or that there won’t be increases in costs some years. It means, as you’ve highlighted, that as costs increase, the same amount of riders (or fewer) will be expected to pay for a portion of the increased costs through fare increases (there have been two general fare increases in the last 10 years). The rest of the annual operating deficit is subsidized by the road fund; in fact, the road fund subsidy in 2019 was \$1,725,890.

For the last 10 years, we have been delivering basically the same service; however, our vessel is aging, so our shipyard work is more extensive than it was 10 years ago. And maintenance costs have increased due to factors outside of our control. For example, in 2014, the entire car deck was stripped down to bare steel and re-coated as a change order during the dry dock period. The bid proposal price for spot coating the car deck was originally \$47,000, and the change order for stripping and re-coating was an additional \$30,290. The same scope of work (strip and re-coat the car deck) was bid in the 2019 contract and the cost was \$143,469, or double what it cost in 2014. Another example; shipyards used to

issue us a credit to take our fuel, but due to tightened environmental policies, they now charge us to remove it as they have to pay a significant cost to dispose of it. We also have increased costs that go to pay our marine engineering firm to oversee more vessel maintenance projects in order to comply with USCG requirements, and maintain our Certificate of Inspection.

To aid this discussion and inform future work, O&M expenses should be broken down, if possible, into Operations and Maintenance separately. This would help identify where cost increases are coming from and what might be appropriate responses.

Skagit County response: Our financial reports are what we use to categorize expenditures. There is a break-down of what items are contained in each of these categories in Appendix D of the report. For the purposes of this report, there is not a requirement to break down O&M expenditures separately. However, more detailed discussions can be had regarding this suggestion.

5. Another positive feature of the Report is its inclusion of Appendix D, Ferry Division Expenditures. This information begins to enable readers of the Report to track categories of expenditures over time. This is of interest since the expenditures topped \$3M for the first time in 2019.

The Ferry Committee has noted in past years that there are at least two ways to address revenue shortfalls – fare increases or cost reductions – and that the yearly Reports seem to focus only on the first, without a discussion of cost control efforts. Without that information it is very difficult for us to explain to ferry patrons why a 15% fare increase is unavoidable. We would like to know with some specificity which expense categories are driving the increase. It is difficult to acquiesce in the proposed fare increase without this information.

Skagit County response: We can make additional proposals for cost reductions; one strategy to control 2020 expenditures was presented in the report, to postpone the 2020 haul-out until spring, 2021. This action has been taken before to control costs, which is why there hasn't been a haul-out every year for the past several years. Should the Board of Skagit County Commissioners direct us to make recommendations for further budget cuts, we will do so during this year's budget cycle.

Thank you again for this opportunity to comment. We look forward to working with you on these and other matters. We understand the challenges of communication in the present situation and are willing to work to meet electronically if that is necessary.

Very truly yours,
Guemes Island Ferry Committee

Rachel Rowe

From: Ferry Comments
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 5:04 PM
To: 'Glen Veal'; Ferry Comments
Subject: RE: 2020 Fare Increase Proposal Comments

Glen,

Thank you for your comments. They have been added to the public record, along with the following responses from Skagit County.

The 10-day public comment period for the report was not extended as the comment period was for the report itself, not the fare increase proposal. The fare increase proposal will be an entirely separate public comment process. Your suggestion for that comment period to be 30 days is a good one in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. We definitely want to allow more time for public participation.

With regard to your comments about consultant fees, The Consultant fees of \$256,208.27 are for the work BERK and KPFF did for the operations analysis. The remainder was for services provided by our marine engineering firm to perform an expanded vessel survey as requested by the Ferry Committee, other work associated with the 2019 haul-out and design work for future ferry maintenance projects. All of these costs are considered O&M expenditures.

Finally, you suggested reviewing expenditures listed in Obj. 540, item 4519 (I believe you meant item 4510 – Rentals) to see if they could be reduced. The \$107,461 listed in item 4510 is for the rental of the passenger-only service during the vessel haul-out.

Every year, during the budget cycle, we thoroughly review expenditures to see if any can be reduced. We can make additional proposals for cost reductions. One strategy to control 2020 expenditures was presented in the report, to postpone the 2020 haul-out until spring, 2021. This action has been taken before to control costs, which is why there hasn't been a haul-out every year for the past several years. Should the Board of Skagit County Commissioners direct us to make recommendations for further budget cuts, we will do so during this year's budget cycle.

Sincerely,
Captain Rachel Rowe
Ferry Operations Division Manager
Guemes Island Ferry
500 I Ave. Anacortes, WA 98221
Direct: (360) 416-1466
Cell: (360) 333-1496

From: Glen Veal [mailto:glenaveal@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2020 8:37 AM
To: Ferry Comments <ferrycomments@co.skagit.wa.us>
Subject: 2020 Fare Increase Proposal Comments

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expecting this email and attachments, and you know the content is safe.

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Attached are my comments regarding the fare increase proposal. Thanks.

Glen Veal
4453 Edens Rd.
Anacortes, WA 98221

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April 21, 2020

Skagit County Board of Commissioners
1800 Continental Pl
Mt. Vernon, WA 98273

RE: Guemes Ferry Fare Increase Proposal

Dear Commissioners,

I am sending this letter to you directly but am also providing a copy to the link for public comment on the proposed fare increase. I would like to ask you to increase the comment period from ten days to thirty days because of the circumstances surrounding the coronavirus pandemic guidelines which do not allow for public meetings at this time. Typically, there would be a public meeting on Guemes Island to inform island residents of the proposed fare increase and also a meeting between the Ferry Committee and Public Works followed, finally, by a public hearing in front of the Board of Commissioners. None of this established process prior to the Board of Commissioners decision on the fare increase proposal can be followed due to the rules about public meetings and possible transmission of the coronavirus. Many Guemes Islanders affected by the fare proposal have not even heard about the proposal and haven't been given adequate time to comment in the ten days allowed for public comment. Please allow more time for public participation.

Regarding the proposal itself, I do not think that a 15% fare increase should be implemented on Oct. 1, 2020, for the following reasons:

- 1) The \$124,000 shortfall that triggers the fare increase proposal is based on increased costs which are not all directly part of the normal operation and maintenance expenses which are submitted to the WSDOT for the deficit reimbursement funds. I am particularly concerned about the inclusion of \$256,208 in outside consultant fees listed in the O&M expenditures. In the GBC 2546 Interagency Agreement between WSDOT Local Programs and Skagit County page 1: 1.TERMS AND CONDITIONS, Item 1.3 Operating and maintenance expenditures are defined as: "Routine" and lists normal expenditures one would expect to incur in the operation of the ferry. It does not list outside consultant fees. I believe that consultant fees are "extra-ordinary" and should be excluded. I believe the listed expenditure of consultant fees should be cleared with the Director, Local Programs, WSDOT, P.O. Box 47390, Olympia, WA 98504-730 before proceeding any further. In Item 1.5 it is stated "WSDOT reserves the right to conduct an audit of the COUNTY ferry system operations and maintenance and to disallow any costs not in accordance with BARS (Budgeting Accounting and Reporting System) and or this AGREEMENT."
- 2) Rather than increasing fares to regain the shortfall of \$124,000 based on consultant fees, I believe it is time to start considering a program of cost reduction or cost containment. It is possible to reign in expenses as an alternative to fare increases. Presently, when it comes to managing the ferry operation there is no oversight or accountability for increased expenses. A review of many of the expenditures listed in Obj. 540 should be reviewed to see if any of the expenditures, such as 4519 "Rentals" for \$107,461, could be reduced. There are many more items listed that should be thoroughly reviewed to see if any of these expenditures could be reduced as well.

With a program of cost containment rather than one of cost expansion it is possible to reign in the continual rising costs and halt fare increases. It is time to stop the escalating cost of operating the m/v "Guemes".

Sincerely,

Glen Veal

Rachel Rowe

From: Todd Sormunen <todd.sormunen@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2020 8:39 PM
To: Ferry Comments
Subject: Re: Question regarding Guemes Island

Thank you for the clarification.

On Tue, Apr 14, 2020 at 3:25 PM Ferry Comments <ferrycomments@co.skagit.wa.us> wrote:

Todd,

The cost for consultation services with BERK and KPFF are included in the expenditure figures in the draft document. The cost in 2019 was \$93,132.21.

Sincerely,

Captain Rachel Rowe

Ferry Operations Division Manager

Guemes Island Ferry

500 I Ave. Anacortes, WA 98221

Direct: (360) 416-1466

Cell: (360) 333-1496

From: Todd Sormunen [mailto:todd.sormunen@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 14, 2020 1:07 PM
To: Ferry Comments <ferrycomments@co.skagit.wa.us>
Subject: Question regarding Guemes Island

From the Draft Ferry Fare Revenue Target Report I notice "the Ferry Division worked with BERK, KPFF" comment. What was the cost of these consultation services with BERK and KPFF and are the costs reflected in the provided draft document?

Regards,

Todd Sormunen

Guemes Island Resident

Rachel Rowe

From: Ferry Comments
Sent: Thursday, April 30, 2020 5:16 PM
To: 'Kathy Whitman'; Ferry Comments
Cc: Commissioners
Subject: RE: Draft 2020 Guemes Ferry revenue target report

Kathy,

Thank you for your comments. The Board of Skagit County Commissioners has been copied on this correspondence as it has to do with the COVID-19 emergency and implementing tighter controls on the ferry. I cannot of course speak for the Board, but I can respond from my perspective as the Operations Manager. It is difficult for the ferry crew to investigate and enforce what is and isn't essential travel; however, we have put up signs and sent out notifications telling the public that travel is limited to essential trips only.

Public Works is not recommending a fare increase because of the COVID-19 situation. The ferry fare revenue target report is drafted each year during the same time, which happened to be during a pandemic this year. Public Works is recommending a fare increase because the fare box revenue missed the revenue target in 2018 and in 2019. We did not recommend a fare increase in 2019 because we were sensitive to the fact that the surcharge had taken effect the prior year and 2018 fare box revenue missed the target by \$50,000.

Sincerely,
Captain Rachel Rowe
Ferry Operations Division Manager
Guemes Island Ferry
500 I Ave. Anacortes, WA 98221
Direct: (360) 416-1466
Cell: (360) 333-1496

-----Original Message-----

From: Kathy Whitman [mailto:kmdwhitman@msn.com]
Sent: Monday, April 20, 2020 11:14 PM
To: Ferry Comments <ferrycomments@co.skagit.wa.us>
Subject: Draft 2020 Guemes Ferry revenue target report

Thank you eliminating fees during covid19 emergency. I also appreciate the education and distancing efforts.

Two concerns:

1. Ferry users cannot be expected to absorb fare loss with higher fees in future.
2. Please Implement tighter controls on ferry use to verify essential travel. Visitors on the island have clearly increased.

Kathy Whitman
Kmdwhitman@msn.com

Sent from my iPad

Rachel Rowe

From: Monte L Hughes <mysticncia@seanet.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 21, 2020 10:00 AM
To: Ferry Comments
Subject: Ticket price 2020

over half the traffic is commercial trucks over 21 ft that's the problem. Double the ticket cost to them problem solved. If it costs 200 dollars more to build a road or a new house makes little difference.