



ELIZABETH KOSA
DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Satpal Sidhu, Whatcom County Executive
and Honorable Members of the Whatcom County Council

THROUGH: Elizabeth Kosa, Public Works Director *EAK*

FROM: Randy Rydel, Financial Services Manager

RE: Ordinance Amending WCC 10.34 Ferry Rates

DATE: March 29, 2023

Background:

Chapter 10.34 of the Whatcom County code addresses the administration of the ferry rates. A recent in-depth analysis of section 10.34, concerning fare box revenue needs and calculations, exposed errors and confusion in the calculation extending back to 2006 and highlighted the need for greater clarity in the definitions and calculations used to determine ferry rates. This realization has commenced a total re-write of certain sections of Whatcom County Code 10.34 in order to provide clarification, clear direction going forward, and a future of accurate and transparent calculation methods.

Summary of Proposed Changes:

To provide clarity to future calculations it is necessary to completely rewrite 10.34.005 "Definitions" in a way that defines each calculation and variable along the way to the final fare box reserve calculation. This stepwise process will provide clear direction beginning January 1, 2023.

It is also necessary to make some housekeeping changes to section 10.34.020 "Interpretation of rate schedule" such as

- requiring valid photo ID when purchasing needs-based multi-ride punch cards and clarifying where those punch cards may be purchased (paragraphs K & L).

- Removing the section regarding a child traveling under the age of 12 without an escort waiver provision in section N to be consistent with our current procedures.
- Updating paragraph M to clarify how multi-ride punch cards are to be handled during fare changes from this point forward.

Lastly, it is necessary to update and amend section 10.34.030 “Use of ferry user fee revenues”. Given the new definitions from section 10.34.005, this section was rewritten to incorporate those defined terms and provide for additional revenue sources to be included in the system.

Recommendation:

Whatcom County Public Work worked with the Lummi Island Ferry Advisory Committee leadership on these proposed code changes and recommends approval of these updates by the Whatcom County Council.

Enclosures:

- Exhibit “A” Whatcom County Code

Contact:

If you need any additional information please contact Randy Rydel at extension 6217.