

September 5, 2023

Whatcom County Council Office
311 Grand Avenue, suite 105
Bellingham, WA 98225

Dear Council Members and Executive Sidhu,

Please consider these points in your Special Meeting discussion on September 5th.

- 1) **Being heard is not the same as being agreed with.** Members of the self-appointed “working group” have been heard many times over the last eight months. Some of their input was incorporated into LIFAC and Public Works efforts. They will stay dissatisfied unless all their positions are adopted.
- 2) **LIFAC members actually received less communication and attention from Council and the Executive when specifically asking for help.** We tried over and over to get support from Council members in our conduct of committee business. Some efforts were made but were minimal compared with the time and attention given to the “working group”.
- 3) **You can act on Council’s authority to sustain passage of the Ordinance.** This will enable Public Works to develop a credible fare recommendation that is modest and responsible. Aspects of the Ordinance and accounting definitions are a centerpiece of the “working group’s” demands. Everyone’s research has failed to produce **the one right answer** about how these matters must be handled. This kind of thing can be argued back and forth forever. Moving ahead on the Ordinance will not break any laws or violate any regulatory requirements.
- 4) **You can give the re-formation of LIFAC the support it deserves.** This means enough time for a thorough process, resources, staff support, a full spectrum of stakeholder engagement, and personal commitment/involvement from Council. Be clear, the “working group” campaigned to take LIFAC apart and they succeeded. They see themselves as the replacement committee. County responsibilities extend beyond that group’s narrow interests.

Thank you for your consideration and all your work on these matters.

Sincerely,

Cris Colburn