



Vashon Island Fire and Rescue
10020 SW Bank Road PO Box 1150 Vashon WA 98070
206.463.2405 www.vifr.org

14 December 2018

An Open Letter to Washington State Ferries & Our Community

Re: The Proposed Ferry Schedule Changes

Thank you for the opportunity to be engaged in the development of a new ferry schedule. Building upon my input at the Island based WSF meetings, my previous letter (05 Nov 18), Wednesday's WSF meeting in Fauntleroy and my conversations with Mr. Justin Resnick, as the process approaches its conclusion, I feel compelled to continue my commitment, identifying more specifically with regards to concerns, ideas and requests.

I am in receipt of the newest revised draft schedule and do not believe it is better than today's schedule. Vashon has lost four departures to Fauntleroy and has received an additional hour wait between boats. The number of Fauntleroy hour long waits has not been reduced and are now more impactful of the 'work day' crossings. With regards to the new schedule I would specifically note that the Vashon and Fauntleroy schedules have no less than seven waits between boats that are an hour or more. We need boats on an average of twice a day (1.7 per WSF's presented statistic), with no control of when we will be called upon, this leaves a 23.3% chance we will be waiting at the dock to get a patient to a hospital and an equally critical 20.5% chance we will have an extended wait returning to the Island, prolonging our personnel from returning to service. I question such waits and odds and would ask that the new schedule further improve services via reducing or eliminating such delays between departures.

Of the statistics I shared with your organization *Call Volume By Time and Day* (11/16/2017-11/16/2018) one of the longest gaps on the Fauntleroy Dock between 15:30 to 16:35 almost perfectly aligns with the represented year's busiest times of day for us. Based on the combination of this information I find it disturbing that I can almost plan on the likelihood of having a crew and vehicle waiting 65 minutes, with another 20 minutes crossing time to get back in service. In our industry an hour and twenty-five minutes is not a life time but it can cost a life.

We are a small agency. On a 'typical day', a single aid car off the island accounts for 25% of our aid cars and 40% of our frontline responders. With simultaneous calls at approximately 15% of our call volume, with this year's total already exceeding all of last year's by 11%, we are even more likely to have multiple aid cars off Island concurrently and the speed of their return to the Island directly impacts our ability to safeguard the community. We believe a schedule that puts more boats at the Fauntleroy and Vashon Docks more regularly and evenly timed throughout the day a necessity and a hallmark of the understanding, more the acknowledgement, that the boats are the Island's only roads, bridges and maritime highways.

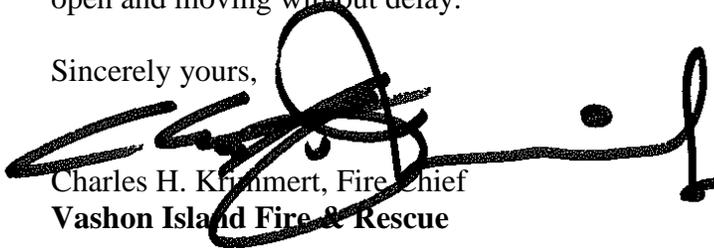
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Complimenting additional schedule improvements I further recommend that we establish protocols and procedures to divert or expedite boats, with a Fire District or Medic One vehicle on them, to Vashon so as to address immediate needs; specifically active emergency dispatches that are taxing our emergency personnel and resources. Equally, systems need to be established to expedite loading and delivering fire trucks and ambulances from other agencies, who are responding to emergencies on the Island at the request of Vashon Fire and/or King County Medic One.

We understand that there is a request that Ferries meet with two Vashon advocates and two State legislators regarding further schedule improvements. On behalf of the Fire District, my Board of Fire Commissioners and in support of the Island community's safety I ask that this work session take place. We will of course be happy to attend or continue to assist the Washington State Ferry System in further improving the schedule and understanding our emergency operations as it works to support Vashon Island's emergency services and transportation needs.

Do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or need additional information. Thank you for your time, assistance and on-going efforts to keep our roads to the greater world open and moving without delay.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charles H. Krimmert', written over the typed name and title.

Charles H. Krimmert, Fire Chief
Vashon Island Fire & Rescue

Copy: Joe Nugyen, Senator Elect, District 34
Joe Fitzgibbon, House Representative, District 34
Eileen Cody, House Representative, District 34
Michele Plorde, Director of Emergency Medical Services
Susan Riemer, Editor Beachcomber