

Board Position on Implementing Non-911 Emergency Ferry Service

Herron Island is unique. We are one of the only islands in Puget Sound that operates a ferry service without any State or County government support.

The Association provides ferry service on a regularly scheduled basis year-round and on a 24/7 basis for medical emergencies that are triggered by a call to 911. Special ferry runs are available to members when they are scheduled with the crew in advance at a rate of \$175 for a one-way run. Pre-scheduling special ferry runs allows the crew to work around any labor restrictions that would violate the Coast Guard's 12 in 24 hour rule. They are able to swap work schedules with another crew member when work hour conflicts dictate. But only when known in advance. We have a very small permanent ferry crew with standby crew available when they are pre-scheduled. But not on a moment's notice.

The Board considered this request very carefully over the past several weeks. We researched other ferry operations in Puget Sound and found that neither the State nor the County offer non-911 emergency service to residents. They all provide service for medical emergencies that are triggered by a call to 911. But nothing else. And when they are called out for medical emergencies in the middle of the night or following a crew's regular shift, they have replacement crew to fill in for the following day. We do not have that luxury.

As part of our research we had a discussion with the Island Manager with regard to the availability of the crew. Our crews are often called upon to work very long days when shuttling is at its heaviest. At the end of their shifts they look forward to a much needed rest, knowing that they may be called out for a 911 emergency when a member's life is at stake, which they do without a moment's hesitation. The Board feels that increasing the crew's responsibilities with this obligation would be an added burden. Given that and the added constraints identified above, the Board has decided not to make non-911 emergency service available to the membership at this time.

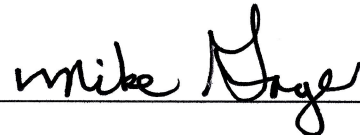
There are alternatives available to members seeking transportation off the island . A member could arrange for a private boat to transport them across if needed. Members could then arrange for ground transportation by private vehicle or a taxi service to meet them on the mainland side.

The Board is aware that this is a sensitive issue and realizes that this decision will be unpopular with some members. We hope you understand.

Janet Podell



Mike Gage



Ferd Reichlin



Chet Latimer



Bob Hartnett

