

Port Townsend-Coupeville Partnership Group

**Thursday, December 15 | 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.*
Cotton Building, 607 Water St, Port Townsend**

AGENDA

Time	Topic	Lead
5:30 p.m.	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Remarks • Introduce new members • Overview Agenda 	David Moseley, Assistant Secretary, WSF Partnership Group Members Heather Rogers, Facilitator (BERK)
5:40 p.m.	Deposit Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview WSF proposed deposit policies for Phase 1 • Group Discussion 	Heather Rogers Brian Churchwell, WSF
6:00 p.m.	Software Demonstration – Make a reservation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose and limitations of sharing software in progress • Software demonstration and discussion 	Brian Churchwell Captain George Capacci, WSF
6:40 p.m.	Change and Cancellation Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview WSF proposed change and cancellation policies for Phase 1 • Group Discussion 	Heather Rogers Brian Churchwell
7:15 p.m.	Establish Next Meeting Date and Other Next Steps	Heather Rogers
7:20 p.m.	General Comments	Heather Rogers
7:30 p.m.	Thank You; Meeting Adjourned	Captain George Capacci

Meeting Materials:

- Deposit Overview
- Software Demonstration: Introduction and screen shot package
- Change and Cancel Policies
- Change and Cancel Policies at other Ferry Systems

* Coincides with sailing schedule; 4:30 departure from Coupeville and 8:30 departure from Port Townsend

For more information, please contact:
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PORT TOWNSEND – COUPEVILLE PARTNERSHIP GROUP Deposit Overview

WSF is developing a reservation system that will require most customers to pay a deposit in order to make a reservation. The deposit is not an extra fee – it will be applied towards the purchase of a fare when the customer redeems his or her reservation.

Payment of Deposit Advance

- General customers will be required to pay an up-front deposit in order to make a reservation.
- Customers who participate in WSF’s account programs for frequent users will not be required to pay the deposit up-front. They will agree to pay the deposit if they do not show up for their reservation AND do not travel on another sailing that day.
- At the tollbooth, the customer will be required to pay the difference between the deposit amount paid (if paid in advance) and the applicable fare due

Proposed Deposit Policies by Customer Type

	General Customers	Premier Account Customers (<i>incl. carpools and vanpools</i>)	Commercial Account Customers
1. Make a reservation: payment of up-front deposit required	Yes	No	No
2. At the tollbooth	Pay the difference between fare due and deposit paid	Pay fare due (can use multi-ride card)	Travel recorded to commercial account and billed monthly
3. No show: no prior change/cancelation and customer doesn’t travel later that day	Forfeit deposit paid	Charged deposit amount	No show recorded to commercial account and deposit charge included in monthly bill

Exemption from Up-Front Deposits

- **Commercial Customers.** Customers with a WSF commercial account who are billed monthly will not pay an up-front deposit. They will be billed the applicable deposit amount if they do not show up for their reservations and do not travel that same day.
- **Premier Account Customers.** Customers who participate in WSF’s Premier Account program for reservations will not be required to pay an up-front deposit. WSF is proposing the following policies for Premier Accounts for Phase I:
 - Eligibility: Purchase WSF’s vehicle and driver multi-ride *revalue* product.

- Keep a valid credit card on file with WSF.
- With each reservation, agree that the credit card on file will be charged the deposit amount if the reservation is not redeemed and travel does not occur that same business day
- Customers who wish to make reservations and pay for travel with a vehicle and driver multi-ride product must enroll in the Premier Account Program

Deposit Amount

- System requirements have been written such that deposit amounts be flexible across the system and adjustable for each fare category
- Depending on system capabilities, WSF will either:
 - 1) Preferred option: Set the deposit for each fare category equal to the applicable senior/disabled base season fare, or
 - 2 Use the deposit amounts programmed into the system for Sidney (\$7, \$15, or \$30) and charge whichever amount is closest to, but less than the expected vehicle fare
- Terminal and operations staff do not expect that this will affect throughput at the tollbooth
 - 5% of vehicle ridership uses multi-ride products
 - 21% of vehicles pay senior/disabled fares
 - Vehicles have an average of one additional passenger in them

Preferred Option: Deposit Amounts by Fare Type and Balance Due at Tollbooth

Vehicle Size	Deposit Amount	Senior/Disabled Driver Payment at Tollbooth		Full Fare Driver Payment at Tollbooth	
		Base Season	Peak Season	Base Season	Peak Season
Small Vehicle (Under 14')	7.40	0.00	1.35	1.50	2.85
Standard Vehicle (14' - 22')	8.35	0.00	2.85	1.50	4.35
Motorcycle	2.95	0.00	1.20	1.50	2.70
22' - 30' (Under 7'6" High)	13.40	0.00	4.65	1.50	6.15
22' - 30' (Over 7'6" High)	28.05	0.00	9.30	1.50	10.80
30' to under 40'	38.10	0.00	12.30	1.50	13.80
40' to under 50'	48.20	0.00	15.30	1.50	16.80
50' to under 60'	58.25	0.00	18.30	1.50	19.80
60' to under 70'	68.35	0.00	21.30	1.50	22.80
70' to under 80'	78.45	0.00	24.25	1.50	25.75

Alternative Option: Deposit Amounts by Fare Type and Balance Due at Tollbooth

Vehicle Size	Deposit Amount	Senior/Disabled Driver Payment at Tollbooth		Full Fare Driver Payment at Tollbooth	
		Base Season	Peak Season	Base Season	Peak Season
Small Vehicle (Under 14')	7.00	0.40	1.75	1.90	3.25
Standard Vehicle (14' - 22')	7.00	1.35	4.20	2.85	5.70
Motorcycle	0.00	2.95	4.15	4.45	5.65
22' - 30' (Under 7'6" High)	7.00	6.40	11.05	7.90	12.55
22' - 30' (Over 7'6" High)	7.00	21.05	30.35	22.55	31.85
30' to under 40'	30.00	8.10	20.40	9.60	21.90
40' to under 50'	30.00	18.20	33.50	19.70	35.00
50' to under 60'	30.00	28.25	46.55	29.75	48.05
60' to under 70'	30.00	38.35	59.65	39.85	61.15
70' to under 80'	30.00	48.45	72.70	49.95	74.20

PORT TOWNSEND – COUPEVILLE PARTNERSHIP GROUP Software Demonstration – Make a Reservation

In an effort to solicit feedback and improve the reservations website for customers, WSF is sharing work in progress with the Partnership Group. This is not the final software – you may notice sections that look incomplete and data that appears inconsistent with other WSF information. These issues will be resolved prior to public release of the software.

Type of Feedback Requested

At this stage in development, WSF is seeking general input on the make a reservation website process:

- Does the website have the right level of information displayed? Is there too much or too little?
- Is there anything missing?
- Is the process for making a reservation and the user interface intuitive?
- Is there anything about the current reservations website you'd like to see replicated or fixed?

Usability Testing

In addition to soliciting informal feedback from the Partnership Group and WSF staff, formal usability testing will be conducted on the website.

Usability testing measures the quality of the user's experience when interacting with a website. It evaluates things like:

Performance – how much time and how many steps are required for basic tasks?

Accuracy – how many mistakes did people make, and how easy were they to resolve?

Recall – how much does the person remember of the experience?

Emotional response – how does the person feel about the tasks completed and web experience?

WSDOT conducts usability testing with special software and equipment. This typically occurs in a lab-based testing environment where the usability team can monitor verbal and facial expressions of the user as well as how they navigate through the site.

Partnership Group members will be given the option to participate in usability testing if they would like to be involved.

Process for Finalizing the Website

- Developers will continue to add new functionality/features (e.g. change/cancel a reservation, premier account features, etc.).
- WSF will solicit feedback from Partnership Group and staff as new features become available.
- Formal usability testing will be conducted concurrently.
- Developers will incorporate changes based on input received and results of usability testing.
- There will be iterations and ongoing improvements.

PORT TOWNSEND – COUPEVILLE PARTNERSHIP GROUP Proposed Change and Cancellation Policies

Objectives

- Accommodate customers' return trip uncertainty – be flexible enough to allow for last minute changes
- Fill vessel vehicle deck during peak sailings – avoid too many last minute cancellations
- Reduce last minute calls to info agents for changes/cancellations – set cut-off times so that info agents have enough time to process calls
- Ensure terminal staff are aware of what is reserved on the next sailing so they can properly stage the loading dock – avoid too many last minute cancellations; reduce no-shows
- Keep the policies simple and easy for customers to understand

Related Key Business Rules and Constraints

- **On time arrivals:** customers with reservations who arrive at the terminal within the stated arrival time window are guaranteed a place on the vessel
- **Early/Late arrivals:** general customers who arrive late, meaning they travel the same day they have a reservation but they don't arrive in time for their reserved sailing, keep their deposit but go to the back of the drive-up line. Premier account customers who arrive late go to the back of the drive-up line but are not charged the deposit amount for the sailing they missed. This is the primary strategy for accommodating return trip uncertainty. Customers who arrive for sailings earlier than their reserved sailing may be asked to leave the terminal and return for their reserved sailing.
- **No-shows:** general customers who do not travel on the day they have a reservation, will lose their deposit. Premier customers who do not travel on the day they have a reservation will be charged the applicable deposit amount.
- **No additional fees:** In Phase I, WSF will not charge any additional fees (change, cancel, administrative, etc.) for reservations. The tools it has to manage change/cancel activity are whether or not a customer forfeits his/her deposit (or in the case of premier account customers, is charged the deposit) and the timing around when this might happen.

Proposed Change & Cancel Policies

More than 24 hours in advance of the reserved sailing time:

Customers can change or cancel reservations as much as they would like free of any cost

Customers are refunded their deposit if they cancel within this timeframe

Reasons for the policy:

- During this timeframe, change and cancel activity does not affect WSF staffing needs or terminal operations.

PROPOSED CHANGE AND CANCELATION POLICIES (CONT.)

- Most reservations are canceled early enough to make them available to customers who want to make last minute reservations.
- Simple, easy to understand rule for customers

Less than 24 hours but greater than 2 hours in advance of the reserved sailing time:

Customers who cancel their reservations do not receive a refund on their deposit

Customers are allowed one free change per reservation in this timeframe (note: if customers change their reservation to another day, they have used up that free last minute change and cannot change that reservation again)

If customers want another change, it will be treated like a cancellation (deposit is forfeited or charged if it hasn't been paid already), and the customer will need to book a new reservation

Reasons for the policy:

- During this timeframe, too many cancellations would lead to unused vessel capacity, as new customers won't have adequate time to book the slots that have been canceled
- This policy is similar, though more generous, than some other ferry systems that allow one free change (Blackball, Wightlink)
- Reduces burden on WSF call center, since customers know they can only change once. Two hours gives call center enough time to process calls.
- Terminal has enough time plan staging

Less than 2 hours in advance of the reserved sailing time:

Reservation system is "locked," and customers cannot make, change or cancel reservations.

Deposits will not be forfeited if the customer travels any time that day

Reasons for the policy:

- Terminal staff needs to know what reservations to expect in order to plan vehicle staging
- Drive-up customers need to know likelihood of getting on the next sailings
- Call center cannot handle a large volume of last minute calls to change reservations
- The policy is still flexible for customers – they will not lose their deposit if they travel that day, but they will have to go stand-by

PORT TOWNSEND – COUPEVILLE PARTNERSHIP GROUP

Change and Cancelation Policies in Other Ferry Systems

The following change and cancel policies were assembled based on internet research, and in some instances, conversations with staff from other ferry systems.

	Cancel Policies	Change Policies
BC Ferries	No refund – reservation fee is non-refundable and forfeited with cancelation	\$9.00 change fee up to 1 hour prior to sailing
Blackball	No refund – reservation fee is always forfeited with cancelation, but the cost of the ticket is refunded	One free change , then treated as cancelation
Alaska	Prior to 14 days in advance, \$10 administrative fee to cancel, and fare is refunded in full. Less than 14 days: \$10 fee to cancel plus \$15 of the fare is forfeited	\$10 change fee – free change if the new itinerary costs more (customer pays the difference)
Wightlink	Cancelation fee ranging from \$8 to full price of ticket (depending on timing)	One free change , \$8 for each additional change
Steamship Authority	Prior to 14 days in advance, \$10 administrative fee to cancel, and fare is refunded in full. Less than 14 days, fare is forfeited	One free change , \$10 for each additional change up to 1 hour prior to sailing
North Carolina	Refund if canceled by 4pm on the day prior to the sailing	Unknown
Cape May Lewis	\$5 Cancelation fee	Unknown
Bridgeport-Port Jefferson	Refund if canceled 3 hours in advance . \$15 no-show fee waived if customers travel the same day	No penalty to change up to 3 hours in advance for same day sailings only