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Rockport Group Requests Better Ferrying Service¹

Presenting a petition for adequate ferry service on the river at Rockport, citizens met with the county commissioners Wednesday in the commissioners' chambers. The petition, with 269 signatures, requested that each ferry operator be paid at least \$210 a month; that a relief operator be employed for rush hours, that proper approaches to the ferry be constructed and that the ferry be kept pumped out at all times and that a capable ferryman be engaged. Commissioners asked for time to take the matter under consideration.

Basing their contention on the fact that the ferry services 26 commercial haulers, 14 farmers and dairymen, and 10 other residents, the group told the commissioners that there has been rapid deterioration of the ferry service in the last 12 months and while they would like to have a bridge, but realize that that is hard to get right now; they are most interested in adequate ferry service, since the traffic is heavy. Fred Shular, a representative from a selective logging company, who acted as chairman for the delegation, stated at times during the past three months, there has been no ferry operator, and individuals themselves have had to wait on the ferry. Consequently, he said, it is often "swamped."

Belief was expressed by the commissioners that service is impaired through overloading the ferry above the 10-ton load limit, and that loggers are abusing the privilege of using a ferry that was not

constructed in the first place for logging operations, but for the traveling public resulting in deterioration.

Commissioners stressed the fact that the county is now using its surplus fund for road expenses and that if the salary of one ferry operator is raised, the salaries of operators all down the river will have to undergo the same change.

Representatives from the various concerns present using the ferry, disagreed with the overloading contention, voicing the opinion that the trouble stems from the fact that there are not enough efficient operators on the job to keep the ferry going at all times. The City Light Company quoted figures to... how many people and how... branches of the war effort in battle and Skagit County are affected by the failure to get men and equipment across at proper times.

Haulers summed up their request that the county raise the pay of the operators, keeping two men or employ a third for the... hours, with the firm conviction that if deterioration to the... results from any overloading... too is the result of hiring inefficient operators, who will not establish the loading requirements.

H. O. Walberg, county engineer, told the men that they should have had a bridge across the river long ago, if it were possible to... materials that the county can't... priorities, and have only what left after the

¹ Unfortunately some of the text in this article was unreadable. Where this happened is denoted by . . .

army and navy set are filled. A change in the construction of the ferry apron... agreed upon, in order to allow... wheels.