

April 27, 2021

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VIA WEB PORTAL

Mr. Mark L. Johnson  
Executive Director and Secretary  
Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission  
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621 Woodland Square Loop SE,  
Lacey, WA 98503

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State Of WASH.  
UTIL. AND TRANSP.  
COMMISSION

Re: TS-210265; San Juan Express, Inc., Second Phase of Time Schedule and Tariff Revisions for 2021 Season; COVID Surcharge Proposal

Dear Mr. Johnson:

Pursuant to discussions with Commission staff, enclosed please find a filing by San Juan Express, Inc. ("SJE") supporting the imposition of a proposed \$3.00 one-way passenger surcharge for the 2021 season to address costs incurred by SJE to outfit its vessel and boarding areas with social distance and enhanced sanitation improvements pursuant to Centers for Disease Control ("CDC") and Governor Inslee's public health mandates to seek to better protect the traveling public against the COVID 19 virus.

As the enclosed workpapers reflect, the company has recently incurred various costs, amongst others, for permanent changes to its vessel including plexiglass dividers and shields, spacing out tables and dividers in the interior space, acquiring ionization generators installed in airducts to continually cleanse the air and regenerate outside oxygen coming into the cabin to kill any bacteria as it enters the vessel, and nightly ozone spraying while the vessel is in berth to further mitigate any chance of a virus being picked up on interior surfaces of the vessel.

Importantly, this surcharge also entails a voluntary reduction in passenger capacity for the 2021 season which will reduce the maximum passenger payload to 150 passengers. While the vessel is certified by the United States Coast Guard to transport 242 passengers, historically the company has maintained a 200 passenger limit, but due to concerns about hosting passengers in congregate spaces, and in order to provide a heightened level of comfort and safety for its passengers, it is reducing maximum capacity to 150 for this entire season.

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That reduction, of course, will directly impact the revenues to be generated by SJE in the 2021 season but the company is critically concerned about maintaining the activation and viability of this essential commercial passenger ferry route between Seattle and the San Juan Islands/ Friday Harbor.

In support of this filing, in addition to workpapers and links to invoices incurred by the company, the company has also prepared proforma projections and passenger counts based on historical seasonal patterns and has attempted to reconcile that projected passenger reduction to the calculation of an appropriate surcharge for the 2021 season.

At the present time, the company has not yet decided whether to seek to make this surcharge permanent through a filing in the 2022 season but will continue to work with the staff and monitor costs going forward in order to come to an appropriate decision for the 2022 sailing season which of course all depends on the abatement of the pandemic.

San Juan Express, Inc. greatly appreciates the Commission's attention to this filing and hopes it finds this interim measure essential to maintaining the continued viability of the operations and safety of the traveling public in this important Seattle/Friday Harbor route.

Yours truly,

WILLIAMS, KASTNER & GIBBS PLLC

*/s/ David W. Wiley*

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Enclosures  
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