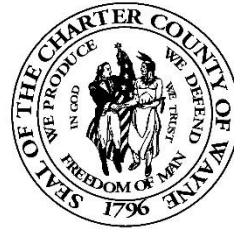


NEWS RELEASE



WAYNE COUNTY COMMISSION

Office of Public Information

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Wayne County Commission passes Palamara resolution requesting Grosse Ile Toll Bridge schedule changes to aid motorists

Wayne County Commissioners today unanimously approved a resolution sponsored by commission Vice-Chair Joseph Palamara (D-Grosse Ile Township) requesting the U.S. Coast Guard to prohibit non-emergency openings of the drawbridge for water vessel traffic during peak hours.

Commissioner Palamara said that such action would prevent the long traffic back-ups motorists currently face at a time when the island's free bridge, the only other route on and off the island, remains closed for repairs and rehabilitation.

"It's a common sense measure to alleviate traffic back-ups at peak motor vehicle crossing times," Commissioner Palamara said. "With the toll drawbridge currently accommodating all motor vehicles on and off the island, long back-ups have resulted when the drawbridge is closed to vehicle traffic, particularly during rush hours. This resolution fully supports the efforts to obtain drawbridge schedule relief from the U.S. Coast Guard."

The Coast Guard maintains jurisdiction over each of the Grosse Ile bridges. The Grosse Ile Board of Trustees recently approved an initial resolution requesting the change in the drawbridge schedule.

The resolution specifically requests that:

The United States Coast Guard temporarily modify 33 CFR Â§ 117.631(a), by prohibiting non-emergency openings of the Grosse Ile Toll Bridge drawbridge for water vessel traffic between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., and 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays, and between 12:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on weekends, through the end of December 2021.

The resolution also states that:

"By granting the request for the temporary rule modification, the Coast Guard would strike a reasonable balance between the needs of water vessel and motor vehicle traffic, and would serve the public interest by enhancing safety by substantially eliminating motor vehicle back-ups on both ends of the Toll Drawbridge."

Rehabilitation of the free bridge, also known as the Wayne County Bridge, is expected to be completed by December.

A copy of the resolution follows:

RESOLUTION

By Commissioner Palamara

WHEREAS, the Charter County of Wayne, Michigan ("Wayne County") is the owner and operator of the Grosse Ile Parkway Bridge ("Wayne County Bridge"), a drawbridge that crosses the Trenton Channel of the Detroit River, connecting the southern end of the island community of Grosse Ile Township to the mainland at the City of Trenton, Michigan; and

WHEREAS, the Wayne County Bridge has been closed for substantial repairs since May 6, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Wayne County Commission has been acutely sensitive to the concerns of Grosse Ile and Downriver residents occasioned by this situation, illustrated in part by its unanimous passage on February 4, 2021 of Resolution No. 2021- 020, approving a \$9.3 million contract for emergency rehabilitation work on the Wayne County Bridge, which is expected to be completed by December 2021; and WHEREAS, the Grosse Ile Toll Bridge ("Toll Drawbridge") is the only other bridge connecting Grosse Ile Township from its northern end to the mainland at the City of Riverview, Michigan; and

WHEREAS, since the closure of the Wayne County Bridge, the Toll Drawbridge has been handling 100% of the motor vehicle traffic to and from the island, compared to handling approximately 25% of that traffic when the Wayne County Bridge is open; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Code of Federal Regulations ("CFR") 33 CFR § 117.631(a), from March 16 through December 14, the Toll Drawbridge must open for approximately six minutes every half-hour between 7:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. to accommodate the passage of pleasure craft and commercial vessels; and

WHEREAS, with the Toll Drawbridge currently accommodating all motor vehicle traffic on and off the island, long vehicle queues have resulted when the drawbridge is closed to vehicle traffic, particularly during rush hours; and

WHEREAS, on June 14, 2021 the Grosse Ile Township Board of Trustees unanimously passed a Resolution requesting that the United States Coast Guard, which has jurisdiction over these drawbridges pursuant to 33 CFR § 117.631, modify its operating schedule for the Grosse Ile Toll Bridge, to prohibit non-emergency openings of the drawbridge for water vessel traffic between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., and 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays, and between 12:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on weekends; and WHEREAS, the Grosse Ile Township Resolution indicated that the public health and safety of its residents and others traveling to and from the island has been negatively impacted by severely impeded traffic resulting from the Toll Drawbridge's current opening schedule; and

WHEREAS, the Wayne County Commission shares the concerns of the Grosse Ile Township Board of Trustees and in support of their pending request for a modification of the draw schedule for the Grosse Ile Toll Bridge, pursuant to 33 CFR § 117.631(a), submits that the Coast Guard should: (A) As a federal agency, pursuant to 5 United States Code ("U.S.C.") § 605(a) determine that the proposed rule change would not "have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities," because: (1) Grosse Ile Township, with a population of approximately 10,000, is the most directly impacted small entity by virtue of being a "small governmental jurisdiction," 5 U.S.C. § 601(5),(6), and it

supports the schedule modification; (2) The Grosse Ile Bridge Co. ("GIBC"), the owner and operator of the Grosse Ile Toll Bridge, is a directly impacted small entity by virtue of being a "small business," in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 601(3),(6). On information and belief, the GIBC supports and joins in this request for the temporary change in the operating schedule of its drawbridge. 33 CFR § 117.35 (a),(c) provides that upon the request of the bridge owner, the District Commander of the Coast Guard may approve a temporary deviation of the drawbridge-operating requirements for up to 180 days; (3) Apart from openings for pleasure craft, the Commercial Swing Logs for March through July 2021 reflect that the Toll Drawbridge opens almost exclusively for tugboats and Border Patrol, Customs, Homeland Security and Wayne County Sheriff vessels, but not freighters. A temporary modification of the draw schedule would have minimal, if any, impact on water commerce; and

WHEREAS, it is further submitted that by granting the request for the temporary rule modification, the Coast Guard would strike a reasonable balance between the needs of water vessel and motor vehicle traffic, and would serve the public interest by enhancing safety by substantially eliminating motor vehicle back-ups on both ends of the Toll Drawbridge. Now therefore be it RESOLVED, that the Wayne County Commission on this 5th day of August, 2021, joins with, supports and supplements the Grosse Ile Township Board of Trustees' Resolution dated June 14, 2021, submitted July 14, 2021 to the United States Coast Guard, requesting the temporary modification of 33 CFR § 117.631(a), by prohibiting non-emergency openings of the Grosse Ile Toll Bridge drawbridge for water vessel traffic between 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., and 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on weekdays, and between 12:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on weekends, through the end of December 2021; and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the United States Coast Guard, c/o W.B. Stanifer, Chief, Bridge Branch, Lee D. Soule, Bridge Management Specialist and Michael Odell Walker, Bridge Management Specialist; the Township of Grosse Ile c/o Supervisor James C. Budny; the City of Riverview c/o Mayor Andrew Swift; the City of Trenton c/o Mayor Steven Rzeppa; United States Senator Debbie Stabenow; United States Senator Gary Peters; United States Representative Debbie Dingell; Michigan State Senator Stephanie Chang; Michigan State Representative Darrin Camilleri; Wayne County Executive Warren C. Evans; Wayne County Department of Public Services Director Beverly Watts; Wayne County Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Management Director Tadarial Sturdivant; and the Grosse Ile Bridge Co. c/o Paul J. Smoke.