



# Pacific Arts Association

P.O. Box 434, Blaine, WA 98231

July 26, 2019

Blaine, Washington City Council  
435 Martin Street  
Suite 4000  
Blaine, WA 98230

Dear Blaine City Council Members:

The Pacific Arts Association (PAA) recently completed its annual Blaine Harbor Music Festival, and the event was a huge success. It attracted numerous visitors to our City and reflected very positively on the outstanding cultural and educational opportunities available in Blaine. We thank the City of Blaine for all that it did to help facilitate our week of music.

The only negative aspect of the event was the closure of the H-Street bridge over Interstate 5 from Monday through Friday of our Camp Session. We learned of the closure one week before the start of Camp, and this only by virtue of seeing a couple of signs that were posted near the bridge.

For a significant number of years, we have held most of the Camp activities at the Middle School facilities on the Blaine School District. Part of each weekday's activities included presenting a free noon community concert at the G-Street Plaza on Portal Way. The entire Camp population walked to downtown and back each day using H-Street and its bridge. While they were there, many campers also patronized some of our local merchants and restaurants. This year, that route was not possible. The detour that was indicated was twice as long as the H-Street trip.

With only one week left to alter our plans, we found ourselves in a major quandary. Dropping the noon concerts from our schedule was an unacceptable option because we had already advertised the G-Street Plaza concerts extensively. Many of our students, musicians, and attendees consider these concerts one of the highlights of the Music Festival. Asking our students to walk the detour route was also an unacceptable alternative due to the significant addition of travel time that would have to be factored into an already crowded daily class schedule.

We finally elected to ask the School District if we could hire two busses to transport our students, our teachers, and their instruments to and from the Plaza each day. After several days of uncertainty and inconvenience for school officials, bus drivers, and Camp Administrators, thanks to the efforts of Ron

Spanjer and Tina Padilla of the Blaine School District, a successful solution was reached, and two busses were provided for the week.

If PAA had known of this scheduled work a few months in advance, perhaps other arrangements could have been made before we completed all of our camp advertising and recruiting materials. Perhaps the City could have juggled its schedule moving the H-Street bridge project to another week before being locked into contracts and dates. At the very least, PAA should have been warned by the City many weeks in advance to be ready for the closure. We never heard a word from the City.

Understandably, the "successful solution" called for reimbursement for the use of School District busses and drivers, a \$600 fee that was not built into our PAA annual budget. Given the circumstances of this issue as outlined above, we request that the City of Blaine refund to PAA the \$600 fee that was charged us for bus services.

Representatives of the PAA Board would be happy to appear before the City Council to expand on our request or to answer questions. Thank you for your consideration,

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryan Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bryan Johnson, President