



Ferry Advisory Committee Minutes: Issues and Actions

FAC Name: Salt Spring Island Ferry Advisory Committee
Date: June 7, 2005
Start Time: 2:00 pm End Time: 5:00 pm
Location: Harbour House Hotel

Meeting Details:

FAC:	Salt Spring Island
Date:	June 7, 2005
Location:	Harbour House Hotel Conference Room – Salt Spring
Time:	2:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Attendees:

<i>Committee</i>	<i>BC Ferries</i>
Chair, Bob Jones	Roger Charron Senior Master, Rte 9 Long Harbour-SGI-TSA
Gary Holman CRD Director	Ratch Wallace Marine Superintendent, Southern Islands
Janice Harkley	Stephen Nussbaum Terminal Manager, Southern Islands
Bruce Patterson	Nancy Cameron Communications Manager, Southern Islands
Bryan Denton	Tom Schnare Senior Master, Route 4 Fulford – Swartz Bay
<i>Guests:</i>	Gary Leitch Manager, Stakeholder Relations & Consultation
Gregg Dow, BCFMWU	
Michael Foote, Route 9 catering	
Doreen & Wayne Hewitt	
Shaun McIntyre, Driftwood	
Laura Moore	

1. Call to Order:

The Chair, Bob Jones, called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda:

- a. The agenda was approved.

3. Public Presentations:

- a. No public presentations.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

- a. Minutes of the meeting held on October 13, 2005 were approved and distributed in February 3, 2005.

b. Review of Action Items:

- Fulford Terminal Master Plan –

Issue: BC Ferries has a Terminal Master Planning program under way for all terminals. A master plan for Fulford Harbour Terminal is scheduled for Fall 2005. BC Ferries is subject to the OCP: the functional design criteria for the terminal must be integrated with the Trust's planning process.

Actions: **Bruce Patterson** will contact the Islands Trust, CRD, and other community representatives. **Gary Leitch** to advise the Committee when planning for the terminal functional design criteria will begin.

- Route 1 and 4 interchange -

Issue: BC Ferries has submitted a schedule to Ministry of Transport that will leave Fulford at 10 minutes to the hour and leave Swartz Bay on the hour. This will help reduce berth congestion at Swartz Bay, ease transfers between Routes 1 and 4 both ways. However, it means that Route 1 and 4 vessels will no longer wait for transfers and the 5 minute cut-off will be strictly enforced. BC Ferries will accommodate special requests for transfers if possible. This will be on a case-by-case basis. The Committee requests that BC Ferries communicate schedule changes well in advance; if the proposal is accepted this will be the 3rd schedule change in June for Route 4. The Skeena refit was advertised only 2 weeks ahead. BC Ferries is changing its refit and maintenance process so that vessels will not have to go off the run every year for refit. The SSIFAC reiterated their full support for this schedule change.

Actions: **Nancy Cameron** to communicate new schedule as soon as it is approved. **Bryan Denton & Janice Harkley** will develop formal proposal for a reservation system based at Fulford terminal and present it to the Committee and Operations for review and consideration.

5. New Business:

a. SSI Schedule Changes

- **Route 6**

Issue: Ticketing at Crofton is the major problem that causes the vessel to be delayed; loading commercial traffic takes more time because vehicles cannot be pre-ticketed. Overloads are increasing in frequency. A revised schedule has been proposed to the Ministry of Transport that includes adding a 0600 sailing and dropping the last sailing Mon – Thurs. If approved, will be effective June 28. The Committee noted prior discussions with the Company on this subject and fully supported the proposal. Other service constraints include the vessel's dead weight limit of 162 – 172T, which require manual measurement of draft. Engineers are currently looking at a potential problem with the reversing gear on the #2 end of the ship. Route 6 is one of the fastest growing routes in the fleet.

Actions: **Nancy Cameron** will notify Committee as soon as schedule changes are approved. **Ratch Wallace** will notify Committee when draft indicators are installed on ship.

- **Route 9**

Issue: Committee (and customers) question the service reliability of Route 9. Route 9A is successful, and Committee had requested an extension into September. BC Ferries cited Transport Canada restrictions, the need for the Bowen Queen to go into refit and the lack of other relief vessels as limiting factors for extending the Route 9A season.

Committee was not given enough time to provide input into the Route 9 summer schedule changes. Some areas of improvement were missed as a result, and not a lot of improvement will be made in minor schedule adjustments. Committee requests they receive on-time statistics, even when they're negative. Committee identified three serious chokepoints: 1) late departures from Long Harbour; 2) delay in turn-around at Sturdies Bay due to passenger walkway congestion; and 3) service to load/unload the ship at Tsawwassen. The Committee pointed out that even in the under utilized winter period Route 9 did not achieve the company target of 90% on time performance. BC Ferries advised that all three are addressed in part by the schedule changes, and the company is looking at widening the Sturdies Bay passenger walkway all the way up the trestly. Committee acknowledges that the revised schedule provides more time in dock but it adds transit time for SSI customers. The Committee reluctantly accepted the schedule changes as the only alternative within the current service plan.

The Route 9 Winter Schedule will be in effect September 5, 2005, so planning needs to start now. The Committee feels that service reliability may be more important than frequency, and that radical changes to the schedule are needed to make a recognizable improvement to service. A forum for Route 9 schedule changes needs to include the SGI and SSI Committees and their Chairs, working with BC Ferries staff. The schedule will be built on the existing infrastructure (i.e. no new vessels/terminals) and needs to be planned for the short term as well as for the long term. Committee requests information on Tsawwassen's Berth 2 passenger walkway.

Actions: **Ratch Wallace** will provide Route 9 on time performance statistics (year over year and year to date) to the Committee. **Stephen Nussbaum** to contact Committee when Winter schedule planning will start and how the process will work. **Nancy Cameron** to update Committee on plans for building the berth 2 overhead walkway at Tsawwassen. **Nancy Cameron** will forward the Committee's suggestion to include route #'s in the printed schedule brochure.

b. Queen of Nanaimo Sustainment Plan

Issue: Part of a four-year life extension plan for the ship. Work started in 2004 with engine and steel work. The hull is in good shape. Liferaft Systems must be upgraded, which may reduce crew levels. Current crew levels are 21 on the lowest passenger license. Passenger areas will be upgraded, with better food and retail services. Planning is now underway with the crews and project team for customer amenities: washrooms, news stand, cafeteria. Hot food will continue to be served from the galley.

This year's life extension work includes a dry-docking so the refit schedule is from September 6 – December 22, 2005. The Queen of Tsawwassen will be the replacement vessel. Committee asks about September traffic demand with the Tsawwassen's reduce capacity, and flagged the Fall Fair weekend which is September 17 & 18. Captain Charron suggests that Fall Fair traffic travels largely via Routes 4 and 6. Captain Schnare suggested possibility of bringing the Queen of Cumberland into Fulford on September 17 & 18.

Actions: **Roger Charron** to review travel statistics for September and advise on potential capacity issues. **Nancy Cameron** to provide Committee with Working Group's update on the Queen of Nanaimo and potential capacity issues.

c. BC Ferries' mandate for the SSI FAC:

Issue: With two years as a new company, it's time to review the current status of the FAC mandate. BC Ferries advised that all FAC membership will be renewed in November 2005, in conjunction with the municipal elections. This provides an opportunity to review the effectiveness of the FAC process. A

formal review is planned starting in August, 2005. An internal group will develop the review framework then bring the FAC members and the public into the process.

The driver for the review is the Coastal Ferry Services Contract's performance term, which ends March 31, 2008. Prior to that date BC Ferries must present a service plan that describes the level of service it will provide to communities. The company must determine what role the FACs will play in helping to develop that service plan. The Committee acknowledged the efforts of BC Ferries in maintaining a dialogue with the communities it serves, and encourages a stronger relationship with the Islands Trust and the Union.

The Committee strongly suggested that feedback/response from the company to the FACs needs to be improved. BC Ferries advised that part of the review process is to identify what level of resources is needed to effectively deliver their consultation mandate.

Actions: Gary Leitch will advise Operations and the Committee on the timeline and scope of the FAC review process.

6. Correspondence:

- a. No correspondence.

7. Next Meeting:

- a. OCTOBER 2005, Date TBD.

8. Meeting adjourned: 5:25 pm.

Approved:

Ratch Wallace, BC Ferries
Bob Jones, Chair

Date: June 16, 2005
Date: June 16, 2005