

Meeting Minutes

May 10, 2006, 10:30 a.m.

Port McNeill, Black Bear Resort

Attendees: *Committee:*

Doug Anweiler
Emily Feffer
Lauren Klingbeil
Serena Landsdowne
John Rowell, Chair
Mike Seaborn
Debbie Garrett

BC Ferries:

Captain Gordon Nettleton, Marine Superintendent
Melanie Christensen, Administrative Assistant
Judy Cryer, Manager Terminal Operations
Gary Leitch, Manager, Stakeholder Relations & Consultation
Mark Stefanson, Vice President, Communications

Absent:

Jerry Alfred
Brian Wadhams
Colin Skinner

Guests:

None

1. Call to Order: Captain Gordon Nettleton as Chair

10:40 a.m.

2. Approval of Agenda:

a. Approved as presented.

b. The Committee advised that Mayor John Rowell, Alert Bay, had been selected as Chair for 2006.

3. Presentations:

a. Public

b. Marine Superintendent's Report

The Marine Superintendent's report is attached to these minutes. Discussion of the Superintendent's reports included comments on the on-time-performance (OTP) which improved markedly following the installation of new engines, but which has deteriorated of late. Reasons for deterioration in OTP included weather and tides. To improve OTP the refueling time of the ship has been changed and working with B.C. Ambulance to ensure better coordination. Terminals have also instituted a "cut-off" time for Ticket Sales. The Corporate standard for the cut-off of ticket sales is 5 minutes; on R25 and 1 minute cut-off is applied. The access barrier is now lowered on time. OTP is improving again.

More detail was requested on passenger statistics by community.

Vehicle statistics by community were requested.

Overload statistics were requested.

Action: include more detail in traffic statistics in future reports. (G. Nettleton)

At the end of May boarding passes will be required from all foot passengers.

Action: A Service Notice regarding boarding passes will be issued and a reminder of: the 1-minute cut-off will be inserted in the service notice (J. Cryer).

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Minutes of the meeting held on October 5, 2005 were approved and distributed on November 20, 2005.

Review of Action Items:

- a. **Alert Bay Master Plan** – Availability of Public Parking: J. Cryer advised that there will be no public parking at the Alert Bay terminal; BC Ferries' policy is to provide parking only where the company owns sufficient land for the purpose and a reasonable return can be realized on the cost of constructing parking.
- b. **Sointula Master Plan** – Public Consultation: J. Cryer advised that the planning work is just beginning and that there will be opportunity for public consultation with the FAC and members of the community.
- c. **Availability of additional service from Western Pacific Marine** – M. Seaborn advised that he had received a cost estimate from Western Pacific Marine and BC Ferries; and, that he has been in contact with N. Merston, Director of Marine Policy, Ministry of Transportation, with respect to their requirements for documentation on such a request. The proposal is moving forward.

5. New Business:

- a. **Queen of the North sinking** - Several questions were asked regarding the impact of the sinking, including: when will Transportation Safety Board (TSB) report be issued? The report will not be available for a year or more. In the meantime if BC Ferries or the TSB discover anything impacting passenger or vessel safety, changes will be made immediately. Will the replacement of the Queen of the North impact the schedule for the replacement of the route 25 vessel? The route 25 vessel is accounted for in a separate rate group under the *Coastal Ferry Services Contract* and therefore the planned replacement in 2013 will not be impacted.
- b. **Ferry Advisory Committee Review** – M. Stefanson advised that in anticipation of renewing the membership on the Ferry Advisory Committees (FACs) he had asked Gary Leitch to prepare a report on the operations of the committees. This review included formal interviews with all FAC chairs, senior BC Ferries staff, and members of BC Ferries' board of directors. The review concluded that the FACs were a valuable part of BC Ferries' public consultation program and needed to be continued. The review also identified a number of administrative improvements which needed to be made on the part of BC Ferries. These improvements are being carried out now. The FAC advised that it wants to be sure it is being consulted on substantive matters where decisions have not yet been made.
- c. **Coast Card** – M. Stefanson made a presentation (attached) on the proposed Coast Card. During discussion a number of points were raised. These included:
 - Any proposed expiry date less than 1-2 years is considered unworkable; and perhaps inappropriate given that the customer 'advances' money to BCF for services not yet received.
 - Would customers have to prove residency to get a card?

- Is there sufficient flexibility to accommodate group use, e.g. choir or sport group traveling together?
- There is benefit in the idea of a master account to be accessed by individuals in a family.
- There is merit in introducing a pilot project to work out the bugs.
- There was some concern over possible privacy issues associated with tracking usage of individual users.
- When does BC Ferries anticipate making a final decision? Answer: BCF will consult with FACs again in the fall before making a decision late this year or early next year.

- d. **Second Performance Term** – M. Stefanson advised that the company had begun discussions with the government concerning the terms of the second performance term. The terms of the contract between BC Ferries and the government will determine the level of service provided on each route, the service fee the government will pay to BC Ferries to provide service, and consequently the tariff charged to customers. The FAC was encouraged to begin formulating its position on service in the second term and make that known to BC Ferries and their MLA.
- e. **Fuelling of Vessel in Alert Bay** – Fueling of the vessel in Alert Bay was causing OTP problems. Therefore, the ship is now fueled in Port McNeill on Sunday mornings. The fueling and mandatory crew drills on Sunday AM prevent an earlier sailing to Sointula from Port McNeill.
- f. **Earlier Morning Sailings** – Both Sointula and Port McNeill would like earlier sailings to Port McNeill. BC Ferries has the flexibility to alter the schedule; however, more sailings would require a change in the level of government support to the route. Therefore, the committee is encouraged to bring this matter to the attention of the government in the context of the development of the second performance term contract.
- g. **Public Safety Near Terminal** – A public crosswalk needs to be identified at the terminal where two sidewalks are reduced to one.
Action: Doug Anweiler and Judy Cryer to identify location of crossing for painting.

6. **Next Meeting:** September 13, Alert Bay

7. **Meeting Adjourned:** 1:35 p.m.

Approved:

Captain Gordon Nettleton

Date: May 19, 2006

John Rowell, Chair

Date: May 26, 2006

Attachments:

1. Marine Superintendent's Report
2. Coast Card

- BC Ferries is just in the process of starting the dialogue with both the Ministry of Transportation and the Commissioner about the second performance term of the CFSC.
- BC Ferries expects these discussions to be challenging as we negotiate with Ministry of Transportation the service fee required for the next performance term.
- We would appreciate any views that the Ferry Advisory Committee may have about how best to get your input into the process.
- Your comments should probably be coordinated via your chair.
- I would also encourage you to express your views directly to your MLA.

Coast Card

- i. To present the concept of the Coast Card
- ii. Determine if the initiative makes sense

- Prepaid discounts / commuter tickets are the pre-dominant fare type on inter island routes
- The program was designed for residents and regular users
- Right now the rules for these tickets are flexible and the ability to transfer coupons to anyone is possible
- Coast card and rule changes are very distinct issues
 - i. paper v. electronic
 - ii. rule changes – expiry dates (if at all), transferability

- The Coast Card was introduced to replace Assured Loading Tickets (ALTs) in June, 2005
- Nearly 8000 Coast Cards are in use with assured loading tickets
- The cost for a 'book' of ten ALTs is \$789.
- Benefits for customer
 - Ease of use
 - Loss protection
 - Companies can better track usage
- Benefits for BC Ferries
 - Cost savings from printing and fraud



- Wallet size and similar to credit card and debit cards
- Magnetic strip, stores card number only
- Signature block for personal use to uniquely identify cards
- Customer uses last nine digits of number to manage card and check balance
- Verification number (5 digits) is another security measure

- Card is purchased from ticket agents and terminal administration offices
- Purchase or load at same locations
- Card balance can be checked by calling 1-888-223-3379 or *BCF from cell phone
- You can register online
 - Receive loss protection
 - Review account balance
 - Purchase product
 - Can select auto-reload feature (never run out)

- Island residents' perspective:
 - Expiry date may penalize less frequent users
 - We like the ability to transfer tickets among family members
 - Why are you doing this
 - Explain what this is all about
- BC Ferries' perspective:
 - Cost of producing tickets is substantial
 - Fraudulent use may be growing
 - Discount program should be for residents and commuters

- Discussions with Ferry Advisory Committees over the next three months
- Consider the issues and determine if the concept makes sense in any form