

Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Tri-Island Ferry Advisory Committee

Date: November 6, 2007

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Location: Wild Island Foods
Sointula, Malcolm Island

Attendees:

<i>Committee</i>	<i>BC Ferries</i>
Josephine Mrozewski, Chair	Captain Gordon Nettleton, Marine Superintendent
John Rowell (Mayor)	Rob Clarke, EVP Finance & Chief Financial Officer
Doug Anweiler	Amar Johal, Director, Sales & Community Relations
Michael Seaborn	Captain Richard Burnett, <i>Quadra Queen II</i>
Lauren Klingbeil	Parv Bal, Regional Director, Terminal Operations – North Region
Emily Feffer	Kim Macaulay, Regional Manager, Terminal Operations – North Region
Debbie Garrett	
Serena Lansdowne	Jane King, Manager, Sales & Community Relations

1. Meeting called to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Approval of Agenda:

The agenda was approved with the following additions to New Business:

- a. Loading procedures (light system in Port McNeill), car deck issues (monitoring brakes, smoking and vehicles running).
- b. 4:30 p.m. weekday sailing and school students' behaviour in the passenger area.

3. Presentations:

- a. Public Presentations: None.
- b. Operations Report: Captain Gordon Nettleton presented the Operations Report with the following action items discussed:
 - Increase in commercial traffic due to road work and housing construction.
 - Clarification on the capacity on the *MV Tachek* (two cars less in the bow depending on loading and size of vehicles. Actual capacity is: 30 cars, passengers and crew: 250) to the *MV Quadra Queen II* (cars: 30, passengers and crew: 300) during the *MV Quadra Queen II's* refit. **ACTION: Captain Burnett to clarify with crew the capacities of both vessels.**
 - Concern over the delays in the Master Planning of Sointula and Port McNeill Master Planning. Parv Bal, Terminal Director, Northern Region advised the Master Planning process would be re-started in 2008/09. **ACTION: BC Ferries to provide dates and timing on the Master Planning for Sointula and Port McNeill before the end of the year, as current FAC Member on the Regional District's term ends January 2008. BC Ferries to confirm liaison contacts for Sointula FAC Members and Regional District representatives for future community input in the planning process.**

- Ticketing and Loading Cut-Offs: At terminals where tickets aren't sold, customers need to be in the terminal at the cut-off time. The decision of when the cut-off is, is made by the master and customers are informed by the loading officer. Exceptions may be made in cases of emergencies.
- Mayor Rowell expressed concern over the process, and lack of public input. He further advised the majority of people in Alert Bay don't want it.
- Chief Financial Officer, Rob Clarke stressed that fundamentally it's a safety issues, a result of the Morffitt Report, and is not negotiable. The route also has a lot of complaints with regards to On Time Performance, brought up by the Ferry Commissioner. **ACTION: FAC Chair requested a discussion on On Time Performance with Captain Burnett to further understand the impact of the Cut-Off Times.**
- Revenue: CFO, Rob Clarke advised the cost of the fuel is credited to the fuel deferral account which is operated on a route group basis. A portion of the refit for the *MV Tachek* was charged to the account based on its use on the route.
- FAC Chair asked whether upcoming planned refit costs would last the ship to 2012. BC Ferries advised not likely, due to the escalating costs of steel and the environment the aging ship operates in.
- Alert Bay Terminal costs: are being amortized, part of capital costs for the Route Group.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

- a. Minutes of the meeting held on May 3, 2007 were approved and distributed on August 14, 2007.
- b. Review of action items:
 - i. BC Ferries to confirm how stats are collected for the school children traveling on the *MV Spirit of Yalis* and whether or not they are included in the passenger travel stats. **Kim Macaulay, Terminal Manager, Northern advised of the new system implemented called TraCR. School children's stats are called into the Port McNeil terminal and entered into the system.**
 - ii. Captain Burnett to meet with the medical and ambulance professionals to clarify the obligations for both Sointula and Alert Bay. BC Ferries also to break down OTP stats to include ambulance delays and non-ambulance delays for further presentations. **Captain Burnett advised he met with ambulance services for Sointula and Alert Bay. Confirmed that the ferry at times can be delayed up to two hours for an ambulance emergency. Captain Nettleton confirmed the cause of delays are tracked and recorded. There were no ambulance delays reported since the last FAC meeting.**

- iii. Captain Burnett to investigate loading delays and whether a Standard Loading Guide is being followed. Judy Cryer to ensure the Ticket Booth agents knows why the ferry is delayed so that information is correctly passed onto customers. **Captain Burnett confirmed the normal procedures are consistent with larger vehicles loaded down the middle, and smaller vehicles down the sides. The FAC advised the loading officers are not always consistent. BC Ferries requested that the FAC advise Kim Macaulay of any noticeable employee concerns or issues.**
- iv. BC Ferries to determine whether vehicles that don't stay in the lot due to an overload situation are recorded at the Port McNeill ticket booth and included in the overload numbers. **BC Ferries confirmed TraCR records turnaways in overload situations.**
- v. BC Ferries to investigate an opportunity for the Tri Island FAC to have a tour onboard the *MV Northern Adventure* when she is back in service. **BC Ferries confirmed if the FAC members were still interested in a tour it could be arranged when she is back in service late November.**
- vi. BC Ferries to email action contacts from *Performance Term 2*. **COMPLETED.**
- vii. REQUEST FOR ACTION: As BC Ferries considers how the *Performance Term 2* fare caps are apportioned among the different fare types, will BCF consider adjusting the discount fares, to offset the higher percentage increase to the discount fares resulting from the absolute value of the fuel surcharge being rolled into the base fare at the start of *Performance Term 2*? (Question provided by FAC Chair). **CFO, Rob Clarke advised there is a misunderstanding between the setting of fares and the setting of the fare caps. The Ferry Commissioner is to provide a mini-seminar on November 14 to explain it. Essentially, the fare cap is the limit (set by the Ferry Commissioner) that BC Ferries can charge on an average basis per passenger. FAC Chair confirmed the community looks at the discount fare as the real fare. That fare will change when the fuel surcharge is rolled into the base fare. November 1 was the first time there was a noticeable percentage increase in discount fares. Clarke confirmed BC Ferries is open to discussion on setting the fares and in communicating this in the future, but the challenge is getting the maximum amount of revenue under the fare cap to reinvest into the fleet.**
- viii. BC Ferries to email both the CRA Commuter Card Update and the Canada Revenue Taxation update presentations to FAC members. **COMPLETED.**

- ix. Captain Burnett to investigate whether the routing manual can be changed to decrease travel time between Port McNeil and Sointula. **Captain Burnett confirmed he has looked at it. Captain Nettleton is working with Captain Capacci, Vice-President, Fleet Operations to determine if it can be done. Captain Nettleton advised some Captains are comfortable with taking the alternative route to save four to five minutes, and some are not. ONGOING.**
- x. BC Ferries to ensure Sointula's concerns over a parking lot are included in the Terminal Master Planning sessions, not when the public consultation process begins. **Parv Bal, Regional Director, Terminal Operations, confirmed the FAC will be consulted when the Master Planning is re-started.**
- xi. BC Ferries to investigate why the waiting room facilities in Port McNeill are locked before the end of the day. **The waiting rooms are locked for cleaning, in future, terminal operations will endeavour not to conflict with sailings.**
- xii. Captain Nettleton to clarify how the contractor for the *MV Spirit of Yalis* decides on a daily basis what license is needed based on capacity. **Captain Nettleton confirmed that the Master of the *MV Spirit of Yalis* receives a list of student's names from the school board each semester.**
- xiii. BC Ferries to investigate whether a sign can be put up at Port McNeill ticket booth advising of round-trip fares. **BC Ferries confirmed the signage is ordered and would be posted by the summer.**
- xiv. FAC to consider exterior signage at the terminal for visitors and BC Ferries to look into a FAM tour for employees at Port McNeill. **BC Ferries agreed to initiate a FAM Tour of Sointula and Alert Bay for employees before the summer season.**
- xv. Mayor John Rowell to forward AVICC Resolution re: Fare Increases to the Minister of Transportation. **Mayor Rowell confirmed it was sent and he did receive a reply.**

5. New Business:

- a. Corporate News – Super Cs: Amar Johal presented a Corporate News update including an update on the Super Cs.
- b. PT2 Update: Amar Johal also presented an update on *Performance Term 2* with the following discussions:

CFO, Rob Clarke advised the FAC that the \$7,000,000 the Provincial government put into

the fuel deferral account was a direct result of work done by the FACs. The FACs need to keep the pressure on the Provincial government. They are making a difference.

BC Ferries confirmed there was a change in the final price cap on the major routes which was announced on the BC Ferry Commissioner's web site yesterday.

- c. Smart Media: Amar Johal presented the new Smart Media platform; formally known as the Coast Card. BC Ferries confirmed the use of the cards at unmanned terminals (Cortes and Hornby Islands, Mill Bay and Brentwood Bay) has not been determined.
- d. *MV Spirit of Yalis* – Safety Drills/Capacity/Staffing/Two Support Workers: **ACTION: Captain Nettleton to confirm names of support workers and their roles aboard the vessel.**
- e. Trestle Parking (Staff) – Alert Bay Terminal: FAC concerned over BCF crew parking in public spaces when there are ten crew parking spaces. Captain Burnett confirmed all of the parking spots are needed, especially during crew change. **ACTION: Captain Burnett to speak to crew on where they are parking. FAC Chair to speak with the Harbour Master to clarify the concerns on public parking.**
- f. Alert Bay Terminal Costs: FAC requested clarification on who paid for what. BC Ferries advised the entire cost of the terminal was paid for by BC Ferries. **ACTION: Parv Bal, Regional Director, Terminal Operations, to confirm the breakdown of the final cost for the Alert Bay Terminal.**
- g. Sointula Ferry Line-Up Problems: FAC have heard from the public of people butting into line, a restaurant placing their sign on the street where the ferry line-up is and people that can not leave their house because of card blocking their driveway. The FAC advised these on-going community issues further illustrate the need for an adequate holding compound. Again the FAC reiterated their request for involvement in the Master Planning process for Sointula.
- h. Premature Locking of Sointula Waiting Area: Captain Burnett confirmed the waiting room was locked because of constant vandalism and disrespect of the property. He advised the crew to lock it at the end of the business day. It has been locked for the last two years. **ACTION: The FAC requested that a sign be posted on the building that "The waiting room is locked due to vandalism."**
- i. Loading Procedures at Port McNeill: FAC advised of a semi truck being left behind, even though it had arrived first. Concern over people following the lights when there are two lanes, one for trucks and one for cars. **ACTION: FAC to report to BC Ferries (Kim Macaulay) immediately after an incident such as this occurs, along with the time of day and loading officer working the shift. BC Ferries to also review the loading procedures with the light system currently in place.**

- j. School children's behaviour and the 4:30 p.m. sailing: A member of the public raised concerns over the misbehaviour of the school children on the 4:30 p.m. sailing, specifically rough housing near the glass cases. **ACTION: Captain Burnett advised crew had previously been instructed to sit with the students. He will request them to do that again.**
- k. Cars Deck Issues: FAC concerned over cars idling on the decks, people not using parking brakes, and smoking on the car deck. Captain Burnett confirmed there is a no smoking policy on the car deck. **ACTION: Captain Burnett to instruct the crew to enforce the no-smoking policy and to inform passengers with idling cars to turn their engines off and to use parking brakes.**
- l. FAC Survey: Amar Johal handed out a survey for the FAC members to fill out and return.

6. Public Questions/Concerns:

- Shane Field asked why there is not consistency in collecting boarding passes in Port McNeill.
- A concern was raised over the ability of Sointula residents to access emergency medical care in Alert Bay, rather than going to Port McNeill. BC Ferries takes direction from the ambulance service in emergency situations.
- A member of the public stated smaller communities can't afford to pay the costs of a larger community. CFO, Rob Clarke advised the members of the public that according to the route financial, 75% of the revenue to pay for the route comes from the government and the government has never said that there shall be a user pay, what the government has said is that they want to move the system towards a user pay system. He also confirmed that there is a general consensus that some routes will never be able to be self supporting, so those will continue to be supported, however the question is at what level. Clarke also advised that there is no move being made towards any route having to pay 100% of their costs.
- It was again expressed that the changes to cut-off times would not go over well in the community.
- Concern over the seniors paying less, when they may have more disposable income was raised. CFO, Rob Clarke advised the seniors fares are a government policy. The government subsidizes the seniors (Monday through Thursday, except statutory holidays), students traveling to and from school activities, persons traveling for medical assistance, persons with disabilities and their companions also ride for free. BC Ferries then bills the government and is reimbursed to approximately \$17 million dollars last year.

- Shane Field also commented that the ferry exists because of the two communities it serves. The needs of the community are changing. FAC may need to propose radical changes to schedules to fit the changes in the communities needs.

7. Next Meeting: Alert Bay - date to be determined.

8. Meeting adjourned: 8:47 pm.

Approved:

Josephine Mrozewski, Chair

Date: December 20, 2007

Captain Gordon Nettleton, BC Ferries

Date: December 6, 2007

Attachments:

- Operations Report
- Super Cs
- Performance Term 2
- Smart Media