



# Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

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## Denman/Hornby Islands Ferry Advisory Committee

**Date:** May 1, 2008

**Time:** Noon – 3 p.m.

**Location:** Senior's Hall, Denman Island

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### Attendees:

<i>Committee</i>	<i>BC Ferries</i>
Tony Law, Chair	Captain Gordon Nettleton, Marine Superintendent
Andrew Carmichael	Captain Pete Kimmerly, Senior Master, <i>MV Tachek</i>
Ron Emerson	Claudio Raduta, Senior Master, <i>MV Quinitza</i>
Jim Garton	Rob Clarke, Chief Financial Officer
Jan Kennedy	Steve Anderson, Manager, Fleet Deployment and Scheduling
April Lewis	Parv Bal, Regional Director, Terminal Operations, North Region
Louise Bell (regrets)	Kim Macaulay, Regional Manager, Terminal Operations, North Region
David Freeman	Stephen Mayall, Project Manager
Dennis Forsyth	Patricia Ing, Business Planner
John Ralston	Amar Johal, Director, Sales and Community Relations
Jack Forsyth	Jane King, Manager, Sales and Community Relations
Giff LaRose	
29 members of public	

1. Call to Order: 11:56 a.m.
2. Introductions.
3. Affirmation of Chair, Tony Law for 2008.
4. The agenda was approved with the following additions:
  - a. Parking at Buckley Bay – Update
  - b. Public Presentation - Michelle Easterly and Will Thomas
5. Presentations:
  - a. Operations Report – Captain Nettleton presented the Operations Report. The following discussions arose:

FAC Member, Jack Forsyth asked why traffic stats are down. Chief Financial Officer, Rob Clarke discussed various ways to analyze the reasons, e.g. assume it is the ferry

fares. He advised BC Ferries is planning to execute an analysis which will look at: fuel costs, tourism indicators, real estate prices and demographics. He showed various economic indicator slides, one of which showed a correlation to the decline in tourism and the rise of the Canadian dollar.

FAC Chair, Tony Law informed the Committee of an exit survey conducted two years ago. The results show most tourists that visited the Islands came from BC and 85% were from Vancouver Island.

FAC Member, April Lewis suggested looking at the income levels on the Island as well when conducting an analysis.

FAC Member, Jan Kennedy also suggested looking at property ownership. Many residents that travel back and forth don't own land.

Jack Forsyth asked where the Denman East queuing lane was in the Master Planning Process. Parv Bal, Regional Director, Terminal Operations advised the Master Planning process hasn't been completed.

The question also arose on the issue of assured loading for Hornby Island traffic at Denman West in order to reduce the speeding across Denman or the "Denman 500." CFO, Rob Clarke asked if that was the consensus of the whole FAC. FAC Chair, Tony Law advised it has been an issue on the table since 1996. **ACTION: FAC to solicit input from their community and bring forward the issue of assured loading for Hornby Island traffic at Denman West for the next meeting.**

FAC Member, Dennis Forsyth thanked BC Ferries for the support through the Community Investment Program with the Denman Island Readers and Writers Festival.

Further to the issue of parking at Buckley Bay, Parv Bal, Regional Director, Terminal Operations confirmed BC Ferries is not in the business of operating parking lots.

- b. Public Presentation: Michelle Easterly accompanied by a number of protestors expressed their displeasure over the new Coastal Class ferries and the Experience Card. Easterly also voiced her opinion that "essential services are not for profit."

FAC Chair, Tony Law explained the role of the FAC Committee to the group and that there are two ways to get money to run these ferries: from the province and from the fares. He further advised their efforts should be taken directly to the decision makers of the Province, their MLA, or Member of the Cabinet.

## 6. FAC Business:

- a. Buckley Bay Signage: FAC Chair, Tony Law asked whether the large wooden sign on the road would be accessible for messaging to summer visitors. **ACTION: BC Ferries to confirm who has jurisdiction on the sign and whether or not it can be added to.**

- b. Denman Queuing Lane: FAC Member, Dennis Forsyth asked why there had been a change in policy for offloading bicycles at Denman West, whereby cyclists are off loaded first, thereby causing traffic to back up going up the hill following the cyclists. **ACTION: BC Ferries to advise Captains to offload bicycles last.**
- c. FAC Chairs report: FAC Chair, Tony Law advised the Committee of the formation of the Coastal Communities Ferry Advisory Committee which is comprised of the Chairs (or delegates) of the twelve Ferry Advisory Committees, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Transportation Planning and the Director of the Marine Branch. He further advised the Ministry of Transportation was presented with two papers: *Trend in Fares* and *Impact on Traffic* and a request for the Ministry's interpretation of the section in the Coastal Ferry Act that speaks to the "movement towards a user pay system."
- d. Experience Card: BC Ferries confirmed the minimum load for a vehicle Experience Card is \$75, but that does not mean that amount always has to be on the card. There must be enough cash on the card to cover the fare.  
  
Chief Financial Officer, Rob Clarke also confirmed card pooling is coming, but the IT infrastructure is not there yet. Further discussion was deferred to Amar Johal's presentation further into the meeting.
- e. Fuel Surcharge/Cost of Fuel: Jim Garton asked where fuel surcharges are allocated. CFO, Rob Clarke confirmed there is not a fuel deferral account for each route; rather it is part of Route Group 4 which is averaged across the entire route group. All of the excess fuel costs go into the minor route group account, while the fuel surcharges collected go to the overall fuel surcharge account.
- f. Speeding Across Denman: John Ralston advised BC Ferries of his concerns over the "Denman 500" – speeding across Denman Island to catch the Hornby Island ferry. Manager of Sales and Community Relations, Jane King advised a note was added into the Denman/Hornby Brochure reminding customers to take their time crossing Denman Island. It was also requested that it be put in BC Ferries' All Routes Schedule to be published in June. **ACTION: BC Ferries to make announcements on board the ship and to consider posting signage about the amount of time it takes to get to the next terminal when travelling to Hornby Island.**
- g. Integrated Transportation Planning: FAC Chair, Tony Law advised of a meeting being planned for September/October on future transportation issues which would involve BC Transit, the Regional District, BC Ferries, etc.

## 7. New Business:

- a. *MV Quinitza* Returns to Service: Marine Superintendent, Captain Nettleton advised of the improvements to the *MV Quinitza* will be like having a new ship when she returns. The Asset Betterment Project included: new engines (better fuel efficiency), new life saving appliances, new improvements to the passenger lounges and crew areas, new master stations, new car deck, etc. BC Ferries asked the Committee for ideas on celebrating the return of the ship. **ACTION: FAC Chair, Tony Law to solicit input from the community and the Committee to get back to BC Ferries within a week.**
- b. Alternative Service Provider: Director of Sales and Community Relations, Amar Johal advised the ASP proposal has been terminated with a confidentiality agreement in place. BC Ferries is accessing the viability further, it is in the early stages.

- c. FAC Appointment Process: Director of Sales and Community Relations, Amar Johal advised future FACs will move towards a standardized Terms of Reference, very close to what is already in place. BC Ferries confirmed the appointment process will continue to have broad representation from the communities. FAC Member Dennis Forsyth suggested the candidates be reviewed by the Resident's Association to ensure they are a Denman/Hornby Island residents. **ACTION: FAC Chair, Tony Law to forward Amar Johal the structure and organization of the Ratepayer's Association for reference.**
- d. Survey Results: Director of Sales and Community Relations, Amar Johal presented the FAC survey results.
- e. Experience Card Update: BC Ferries advised solutions are being worked on to address the use of the Experience Card at the non-POS terminals (between Denman and Hornby Islands). CFO, Rob Clarke suggested one option is to continue selling the paper tickets, however it prevents customers from accessing the Transit Tax Credit.  

FAC Member, Jim Johnson was pleased with the Experience Card as it reduced his investment in pre-paid tickets he had to buy.

FAC Member, April Lewis objected to the printing of "BC Ferries dollars" on the receipt. An education package was also discussed for School District #71, so they were aware of the use of the secondary cards for substitute teachers, etc. **ACTION: April Lewis to supply BC Ferries with the school contact information.**

**ACTION: The FAC Committee also suggested BC Ferries supply more information on the web site with regards to the use of the Experience Card and what to do between Gravelly Bay and Shingle Spit where there isn't the POS terminal to swipe the Experience Card and paper tickets are still required or cash.**
- f. BC Ferries Environmental Initiatives: Director of Sales and Community Relations, Amar Johal provided information on BC Ferries environmental initiatives.

## 8. General Discussion:

- a. FAC Member April Lewis suggested there should be a public meeting so the public can ask questions directly to BC Ferries. Having the FAC is not enough, the public need a voice. FAC Chair, Tony Law added FAC members tend to be viewed as apologists for BC Ferries. FAC Member, Jan Kennedy suggested a government representative be in the room at the FAC meetings to address the big issue of fares. CFO, Rob Clarke stressed the Ferry Advisory Committees are meant to act as advisory committees to the operations of BC Ferries, and work without political interference.
- b. FAC Member Andrew Carmichael asked what the efficiency of the new engines on the *MV Quinitza* would be. Senior Master, Pete Kimmerly advised when the *MV Kahloke* was re-powered three years ago there was a 33% savings in fuel. At this point it is unknown what the exact savings will be.
- c. Tariff Structure: CFO, Rob Clarke advised there would be a review of the tariff structure, currently there are 4,000 different prices in the system. The number one step is whether or not it can be made more user friendly and understandable. Questions to be addressed include fare equity, the question of seasonal fares, frequent commuters, residents, etc. FAC Chair, Tony Law advised further discussions and ideas could be circulated by email.

**9. Meeting adjourned:** 3:25 p.m.

**10. Next meeting:** Fall 2008.

**Approved:**

Chair, Tony Law

Captain Gordon Nettleton

Date: July 8, 2008

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