

Meeting Details:

FAC:	Salt Spring Island Ferry Advisory Committee
Date	June 15, 2009
Location:	Harbour House Hotel, Salt Spring Island
Time:	6:00 p.m.

Attendees:

Committee	BC Ferries
Harold Swierenga, Chair	Rob Clarke, Executive Vice President, and Chief Financial Officer
Garth Hendren	Captain Christian (Chris) Frappell, Marine Superintendent, Southern Islands
Lorne Bunyan	Mark Stefanson, Vice President, Public Affairs
Kevin Bell	Grant Bierlmeier, Director, Tariff and Revenue
George Ehring	Captain Thomas Schnare, Senior Master, Skeena Queen
Bob Jones	Captain Lewis MacKay, Senior Master, Queen of Nanaimo
Absent: Scott Simons	Sarah Cotton, Manager, Stakeholder Relations
Michael Cole	
Jill Thomas	
Public: 3 members of the public	
Natalie North – Driftwood Newspaper	

- 1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.
- 2. Introductions:** Round table introductions were completed.
- 3. Approval of Agenda:** The election of a Chair was added to the agenda.
- 4. Election of Chair:** Harold Swierenga was elected as Chair.
- 5. Correspondence:** No correspondence was presented.
- 6. Presentations:**

a. Public Presentation

Kirk Featherstone discussed Throughfares. He asked why BC Ferries (BCF) sells Throughfares if there is so much time spent at Swartz Bay. He suggested that a special loading line be created at Tsawwassen. Therefore, passengers going to Fulford Harbour would be given priority loading

at the front of the ferry and would then have an opportunity to make the connection. He also suggested that there could be a direct line onto the Skeena Queen for Throughfare passengers and this enables the Throughfares to skip the line ups.

Captain Chris Frappell replied that the short turnaround is not possible now that the ticket booths have been moved. In regards to diverting the traffic at Swartz Bay, the transfer traffic could be put on the main car deck. There are times where that would work, but processes have to be in place so that it could work all the time. The pinchpoint is a risk for people who don't know the terminal well. Captain Frappell noted that we have to have a constant process for terminal attendants. The company has looked at a queue at Tsawwassen. To have a lane set aside, it has to be managed. A number of considerations need to be taken into account. For example, it puts you ahead of others who have made reservations and traveling directly to Victoria. While this may appear fair, there is the counter perspective of other customers and it must be equitable to all other passengers joining the ship. At the moment, this is the only way we can safely handle it. As far as a priority system goes, there isn't a safe way to manage it at this time.

Rob Clarke added that BCF has worked with engineers to find a solution but possible solutions are cost prohibitive. In addition, safety is a factor. He noted that Throughfares do not guarantee an immediate transfer, they guarantee passage to the next destination.

Bob Jones stated that the signage regarding Throughfares is inadequate.

ACTION: BCF (Ron Gray) to look into additional Throughfare signage.

b. Operations Report

Captain Chris Frappell presented the Marine Operations report with information on safety and security, traffic, on time performance, master planning and vessels. This report is attached.

George Ehring asked how BCF will engage the community in public consultation regarding the Fulford Terminal upgrades. BCF replied that it will take public consultation seriously and will engage the community as soon as possible.

ACTION: BCF (Sarah Cotton and Emma McWalter) to meet with Harold Swierenga to discuss moving forward with the community.

ACTION: BCF (Sarah Cotton) to keep George Ehring and Fulford Study Group informed of master planning activities.

c. Tariff Rationalization

Grant Bierlmeier led a discussion around Routes 5 and 9 and tariff rationalization for April 1, 2010. He stated that he wanted to get FAC's thoughts.

Guiding Principles:
Revenue Neutrality
Simplicity
Reasonability

Grant stated that he wanted to get the FAC's thoughts on moving the fuel surcharges/rebates from a flat amount to a percentage surcharge/rebate.

Grant also proposed a \$2.00 charge for bicycles across the fleet. However, if a customer were to use their Experience Card, the customer would get a discount of \$2.00 on that charge at the \$75 load level therefore making the bicycle free of charge.

Grant discussed possibly eliminating the overheight vehicle charge. Overlength vehicles would potentially be charged the underheight base rate for the first 20 feet, and charged the commercial rate for the extra feet. The SSI FAC essentially agreed with the removal of the over-height provision in principle.

BC Ferries is looking at increasing the buy-in level for the Experience Card when the fares go up April 1st of each year. The buy-in level would then then remain relevant as fares increase. BC Ferries is also looking at discontinuing the passenger only buy-in level as less than 2% of users actually purchase the \$40 buy-in level. In April 2010, BCF would look at one buy-in level of \$85 (Price TBD) and the price would subsequently increase each year.

ACTION: SSI FAC to review the tariff rationalization proposals and get back to BC Ferries at the fall meeting with feedback on the aforementioned items.

ACTION: SSI FAC to direct tariff rationalization questions through Sarah.

It was noted by Kevin Bell that some Salt Spring Islanders may not be able to afford the \$100 load level as proposed by Harold and Bob, and added that we need to be mindful of the affordability of the residents.

7. FAC Business

- The SSI FAC asked that consideration be given to the time of year of taking the Skeena Queen out of service for refit. Captain Frappell replied that all 4 main engines had to be opened up for inspection. Moving forward, engineering has committed to taking one engine out at a time rather than all at once. BCF has been challenged by the time of year for refit due to the availability of the Bowen Queen.
- Harold Swierenga spoke with the Ministry of Transportation regarding the Fulford traffic congestion, and it was suggested that TRAN would look after the cross sectional survey. They were skeptical that there may not be enough right of way to put a third lane in. TRAN figures it is a traffic problem at Fulford, not a problem with the roadway. Harold added that any amount of BCF cooperation with TRAN would be appreciated.
- Harold would like to make a comment that there is not ample explanation in the schedule regarding Throughfares therefore tourists may not be aware of how the Throughfare works.

ACTION: BCF (Sarah Cotton and Grant Bierlmeier) to look into this and get back to Harold.

8. Meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

9. Next Meeting: October/November 2009.

APPROVED:

Harold Swierenga, Chair
Captain Chris Frappell, BC Ferries

Date: August 14, 2009
Date: August 10, 2009