

**Meeting Details:**

FAC:	Chemainus, Thetis, Kuper Ferry Advisory Committee
Date:	June 14, 2006
Location:	Chemainus Inn, Chemainus
Time:	11:00 a.m.

**Attendees:**

<i>Committee</i>	<i>BC Ferries</i>
Sharon Cross, Penelakut	Captain Christian (Chris) A. Frappell, Marine Superintendent, Southern Islands
Fred Mitchell, Penelekut	Marlane Christensen, Manager Aboriginal Relations
Ian Ralston, Thetis	Gary Leitch, Manager, Stakeholder Relations & Public Consultation
Doug Snyder, Thetis	Betsy Terpsma, Community Relations Manager
John MacKay, Municipality North Cowichan	Stephen Nussbaum, Manager, Terminal Operations, Southern Islands
Guests: Debra Toporowski and Anne Baldwin, Constituency Office MLA Doug Routley 7 members of the Chemainus, Thetis, Kuper community	Captain Bill Dickie, Senior Master Rte 20

- 1. Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 11:25 a.m.
- 2. Introductions:** Round table introductions were completed.
- 3. Election of Chair(s):** Gary Leitch stated it is the role of the chair(s) to act as the liaison between BC Ferries and committee members.
  - BC Ferry representative left the meeting room. Sharon Cross and Ian Ralston were elected as co-chairs of the Chemainus, Thetis, Kuper Ferry Advisory Committee.
- 4. Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved as circulated.
- 5. Reports:**
  - a. Public Reports
    - There were no formal public reports. However there was a discussion around the transparency of the process for reappointing the Chemainus, Thetis, Kuper Ferry

Advisory Committee. Although the nomination process was well advertised, there has been no follow-up in the community to advise who was appointed to the committee.

- Gary Leitch outlined the process which included BC Ferries placing newspaper ads in conjunction with local governments to solicit volunteers. The nominations were submitted to local government. Local government sent their appointments to BC Ferries and BC Ferries followed up with letters to the successful candidates. Unfortunately unsuccessful candidates and the community were not formally advised. The process will be changed for future appointments of the Ferry Advisory Committees.
- It was pointed out that there is some confusion in the public between the BC Ferries Master Planning process and the role of the Ferry Advisory Committee. The Master Planning process is specific to planning for the terminal and route needs over a 20 year time frame. The Ferry Advisory Committee works more broadly with local service and terminal issues.

b. Marine Superintendent's Report

- Captain Chris Frappell presented the Marine Superintendent's Operation Report.
- In future, the Ferry Advisory Committee would like to see overload statistics included in the report. Members asked if there is a vessel replacement strategy for Rte 20, Chris Frappell reported that there are no plans to change vessels at this time. Options to deal with vessel overloads were discussed such as different hours of work for the crew and extending the schedule day.
- Gary Leitch advised that significant route information is available on the BC Ferry Commissioner's web site at [www.bcferrycommission.com](http://www.bcferrycommission.com). Customer satisfaction surveys are a requirement of the Coastal Ferry Services Contract and are also provided on the BC Ferries web site at [www.bcferries.com/about/CST.html](http://www.bcferries.com/about/CST.html).
- **Action: Gary Leitch will invite BC Ferries market research specialist to speak to committee members at a future meeting.**

**6. Action Items from Previous Meeting:**

- a. Jurisdictional Boundaries between Ministry of Transportation (MOT) and BC Ferries at Kuper Island
  - Stephen Nussbaum confirmed that the land that is fenced off at the Kuper Island ferry dock is MOT property leased to BC Ferries under a 60 year term.
- b. Discharge of foot passengers last at Kuper Island
  - This was a request made by the Penelekut and has been implemented.

c. Installing Web Cameras

- Tim French from Thetis Island advised that working with Capernwray Bible College and the Thetis Island website a web camera has been installed and will show the ferry line-up as far as the telephone booth. The web cam updates every three minutes and will be operational in the next few days at [www.thetisland.net/ferry](http://www.thetisland.net/ferry). The goal is to improve communication about ferry line-ups on the Island.
- Ferry Committee members asked if BC Ferries will continue to pursue web cams at other locations. Gary Leitch stated that BC Ferries continues to pursue these types of initiatives fleet wide, but BC Ferries does have connectivity issues in many service areas. There is a new program called "Tracker" which will be launched in the near future on the BC Ferries web site. It will show where each vessel in the fleet is located and provide updated estimates of arrival and departure times.
- The Ferry Advisory Committee and BC Ferries thanked Tim French and Capernwray Bible Centre for providing the web cam technology and facility for the camera. It was noted that it would be useful to get feedback on the web cam at future meetings.

d. Scheduling Update

- There was a discussion on the need to change the route schedule to better meet the needs of the residents of Thetis and Kuper Islands. It was suggested that there should be a way to provide assured or priority loading for school kids and business people. It was suggested that a sub-committee of the Ferry Advisory Committee be organized to build on some earlier work around schedules and overloads. Marlane Christensen and Gary Leitch stated that BC Ferries is committed to putting resources together to support the process to rework the schedule and to do further community consultation.
- **Action: It was agreed that the Island Ferry Advisory Committee representatives will form the core of the scheduling sub-committee. BC Ferries will assist with staff resources as required.**

e. Tickets sold at Chemainus for Kuper not to show Thetis

- This ticketing issue has been resolved; all tickets now show the correct destination.

**7. New Business:**

a. Safety and Transport of Students/Passenger Accommodations

- Thetis resident Chris Pegg travels the ferry on the school runs. He suggested a priority boarding system for students. In fact this may be a requirement in the School Act. He would also like to see priority boarding when there are school field trips and sporting events from the Islands. It was pointed out that any sort of priority loading would be difficult to enforce. Signage and public consultation would be required.

- The safety and comfort of the students while on the ferry was also discussed. Some young people are afraid to travel alone on the ferry. At times there are customers under the influence of drugs or alcohol who may approach or intimidate school children. It was pointed out that crews have the right to refuse passage. No soliciting is permitted on BC Ferries. Smoking is prohibited on the car deck.

**Suggested solutions to some of the issues on the vessel were:**

- 1 Invite a community police officer to ride the ferry on occasion.
  - Captain Bill Dickie commented that while BC Ferries welcomes police presence, the police have limited resources and are not always responsive to calls from the vessel. With the vessel schedule it is difficult to wait for a police response.
  - **Action: BC Ferries to contact the RCMP community policing office in Ladysmith.**
  
- 2 Improve crew training on dealing with difficult customers.
  
- 3 Ensure that customers know there is a code of conduct and a process to advise crew members.
  - Chris Frappell stated that if incidents are occurring on board the vessel BC Ferries needs to know. Formal notification and documentation will assist BC Ferries to track and deal with the issues.
  - **Action: BC Ferries to develop a handout and/or signage for Code of Conduct.**
  
- 4 Ask for a community commitment to improve safety and conduct on the vessel.
  - **Action: BC Ferries to work with the Ferry Advisory Committee to develop a campaign around safety and conduct for September as part of "Back to School Month."**
  
  - **Action: BC Ferries to advise if a reservation or advance booking system for school groups on Rte 20 would be feasible and how it might work.** If feasible, the Ferry Advisory Committee will take the idea back to the Thetis and Kuper Island community.
  
- Passenger accommodation on the vessel was also discussed. With the current vessel, customers, especially students, have no options but to wait outside. It was suggested BC Ferries revisit the idea of providing additional shelter from the weather on the vessel.

- Captain Dickie pointed out that an improved schedule to meet the needs of students would reduce the amount of time that students have to travel on the vessel.
- b. Coast Card Presentation
- Gary Leitch provided a presentation on the Coast Card proposal.
  - The purpose of the Coast Card presentation is to clarify misconceptions and to solicit feedback on the concept of using the Coast Card to replace paper commuter tickets.
  - BC Ferries will share the results of consultation with all the Ferry Advisory Committees at the upcoming fall meetings.
  - BC Ferries will make a decision on whether or not to proceed with the Coast Card proposal by the end of the calendar year.
  - Ian Ralston stated that the concept has been discussed on Thetis Island. The short expiry date is a concern. There is also a need to accommodate multiple users like a family or sports group.
  - In general the community sees the commuter fare as the true fare. They are concerned with the Coast Card concept it would be easier to manipulate or raise fares. There is also a concern about affordability for families with the initial capital outlay for Coast Cards.
  - Penelakut representatives noted that there were similar concerns about the Coast Card concept on Kuper Island. Social equity and affordability of fares is a large issue on Kuper Island.
- c. Coastal Services Contract
- Gary Leitch made a presentation on the upcoming negotiation for the second performance term of the Coastal Ferry Services Contract, April 2008 – April 2012.
  - BC Ferries is beginning to discuss the upcoming contract with the Ministry of Transportation and the BC Ferry Commissioner. BC Ferries role is to present cost estimates for continuing the present service in the second performance term. This allows the BC Ferry Commission to estimate what the tariff would be if the service fee remains the same. The government in turn can decide what its service fees should be to maintain an affordable tariff.
  - BC Ferries is recommending additional public consultation as part of the process.
- d. Ferry Advisory Committee Review
- Gary Leitch reported that BC Ferries completed a review of the Ferry Advisory Committee process as the appointment terms were ending last fall.

- As a result of the review BC Ferries has renewed their commitment to the Ferry Advisory Committee process and community consultation. The Marine Superintendents will lead the Ferry Advisory Committee process and BC Ferries will commit more resources to the process to ensure follow-up and response.
  - BC Ferries thanked the Ferry Advisory Committee members for their many hours of volunteer time.
  - BC Ferries is also working to revamp the web site to offer a member's only section with additional information such as the Marine Superintendent's report and automatic notification of meetings and minutes.
- e. Fuel Surcharge
- Fuel Surcharge – BC Ferries has applied for a third fuel surcharge. BC Ferries anticipates a fuel surcharge in the neighbourhood of 10%.
- f. Master Planning
- The Master planning process for Chemainus, Thetis and Kuper is on going. Additional updates will be provided at future meetings.

**8. Correspondence:** None received.

**9. Next Meeting:** At the call of the co-chairs and/or BC Ferries.

**10. Meeting adjourned:** The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

**Approved:**

Captain Chris Frappell, Marine  
Superintendent

Date: July 21, 2006

Sharon Cross, Co-Chair

Date: August 3, 2006

Ian Ralston, Co-Chair

Date: August 17, 2006