

Meeting Details:

FAC:	Northern Services
Date:	May 26, 2004
Location:	Vancouver Park Plaza Conference Centre
Time:	9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Attendees:

<i>Committee</i>	<i>BC Ferries</i>
Chair, Brian Roe; Bella Coola	Captain Gordon Nettleton Marine Superintendent, NS
Jennifer Case; Port Hardy	Gary Leitch, Manager Stakeholder Relations & Consultation
David Crosby; Q C Islands	Pat Morris, Manager, Operational Planning
Larry Greba; Klemtu	Arlene MacLeod, Recording Secretary
Jim Hadley; Shearwater	
Carol Kulesha; Q C Islands	
Earl Newman; Bella Bella	Guests: (10:00-12:00)
Jim Nyland; Ocean Falls	Geoff Dickson, VP Marketing & Retail Services
Kathy Nysten; Bella Coola	Maury Kask, Director of Marketing & Sales
Pete Rauch; Shearwater	
IV Villani; Port Hardy	
Ross Wilson; Bella Bella	
<i>Alternates:</i>	
Julia Ferguson for Mayor Herb Pond; Prince Rupert	
<i>Absent:</i>	
Ben Robinson; Klemtu	
Steve Smith; Prince Rupert	

1. Call to Order:

Brian Roe called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

2. Approval of Agenda:

Agenda Change: Section 8: Scheduling 2.21 Additional runs / additional stops for Bella Bella will include 8.31 Additional runs / additional stops for Bella Bella.

M/S/C Roe/Kulesha

3. Confirmation of Acting Chair:

a. As Steve Smith, Chair was unable to attend the meeting; Brian Roe sought committee approval for him to chair the meeting.

- Approval from Committee granted.

4. Introductions:

a. All attendees introduced themselves.

5. New Business:

a. Gordon Nettleton gave a brief update on the current *Queen of Prince Rupert* status;

- Expect the *Queen of Prince Rupert* back in service on May 29, 2004,
 - BC Ferries has utilized the *Queen of the North* and supplement barges to service the QC Islands, and
 - Are taking a harder line on compensation claims due ship mechanical and advance notice provided; and will compensate on individual basis.
- b. Gary Leitch gave a brief overview of the new BC Ferries' structure;
- Reorganized April 01, 2003,
 - Explained structure,
 - Now accountable to the public, and
 - Expect first AGM to be held in Nanaimo on September 27, 2004.
 - Maureen Macarenko is the northern representative on the Board of Directors,
 - David Crosby asked why someone from Northern FAC not on the board?
 - Gary advised that names for consideration need to be put forward to the appointing committee.
 - Geoff Dickson reminded that the Coastal Ferry Contract outlines the government's authority and BC Ferries obligations.
 - Schedules are a local business issue.
 - Gordon advised that there have been lots of changes in BCFS and that this meeting is a kick start to begin meeting regularly again, and
 - Gordon committed to two meetings a year, the next FAC meeting to be in October.

Terminals

- a. Capital Plans (Skidegate, Prince Rupert, Port Hardy, Bella Coola etc.);
- Gordon Nettleton advised that the Master Plans are slated for the process to begin as follows:
- | | |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Skidegate | 2006 – 2007 |
| Alliford Bay | 2007 – 2008 |
| Prince Rupert | 2008 – 2009 |
| McLoughlin Bay, Klemtu | 2010 – 2011 |
| Port Hardy | unavailable |

Discussion:

- Carol Kulesha stated that there is a need for projects that will enhance revenue; i.e. government parking lot across from Skidegate terminal.
 - Parking will be studied within the terminal master plan.
 - Brian Roe asked how a community plans for terminal improvement.
 - Gary Leitch gave Alert Bay as an example. The communities do their homework; engage a technical analyst; report to council with specific requests, etc.
- b. Bella Coola Traffic Marshalling;
- Gordon Nettleton advises that the informal partnership with Bella Coola continues.
 - Kathy Nysten advises that parking is a problem.
 - Marlane Christensen suggested that a possible solution would be to provide a shuttle service.

- c. Secured Parking at Local Sites (K2, McBay, Denny Island);
 - ❑ Pete Rauch explained that secure parking is needed for vehicles left at McLoughlin Bay for a period of days; pay parking is an option.

Action: Gordon Nettleton will check and advise in October, re: the possibility of the construction of some secure parking area at the terminal or Bella Bella Fish Plant.

- d. Terminal Operations (Tweaking The Schedule);
 - ❑ Ross Wilson requested that the *Queen of the North* Route 10 summer schedule stop in McLoughlin Bay more often to assist travel from Bella Bella to Prince Rupert.
 - ❑ Pete Rauch said they want one stop southbound and one stop northbound, weekly.
 - ❑ Gordon Nettleton said there would not be weekly summer stops.
 - ❑ The stops have a significant impact on Route 10 marketing:
 - 400 – 500 people traveling - the day starts approx 0600 and ends at midnight now; a long day
 - Vessel fuel consumption \$ climb dramatically at each McLoughlin Bay stop
 - ❑ Brian Roe reminded that schedules are now set 1–2 years in advance. He suggested that communities get involved; get feed-back.
 - ❑ Gordon suggested that info regarding the number of passengers to be serviced would be helpful if included

Shipboard Services

- a. Hours of Operation of Services;
 - ❑ Larry Greba explained that the departure times (often late at night) for *Queen of Prince Rupert* do not allow for Klemtu customers to receive required food services.
 - ❑ Gordon Nettleton said that the cost for service must be recovered. Suggestions included: coffee & donuts; a vending machine service; or a kiosk offering refreshments.

Action: Gordon will investigate and report back to Larry and/or Ben.

- b. Health Related Transportation;
 - ❑ Ross Wilson advised that the older Bella Bella population requires more wheelchair accessible staterooms on each ship.
 - Gordon Nettleton advised that he will check on wheel chair stateroom availability. He also advised that advance notice is required to book these rooms.
 - ❑ Brian Roe stated that this should be a consideration for new ship design.

Action: Gordon will check on wheelchair availability staterooms.

Marketing

- a. Presentation - Given by Geoff Dickson and Maury Kask;

- ❑ BCFS marketing objectives are to:
 - grow market base,
 - improve customer travel experience, and
 - broaden the revenue streams.
- ❑ BCFS presently in process to replace the three northern vessels

b. Discussion:

- ❑ Larry Greba asked how the marketing budget has changed and how much is Northern Services related.
 - Geoff advised that NS grew to \$400k this year (total \$1.8m budget).
 - Need to be much more aggressive; find like partners.
- ❑ Larry Greba suggested that Pacific Coastal Air be considered as a partner.
- ❑ Ross Wilson stated that they understand the new structure of BCFS.
- ❑ Jennifer Case stated that market partnerships are a good move.
- ❑ Carol Kulesha advised that the brochure racking/distribution distributor is far too expensive for small local business' on the northern runs.
- ❑ Kathy Nysten agreed. They have negotiated a \$100 fee for three months racking.
- ❑ Kathy Nysten stated that BCF need to market Route 40. There is so much uncertainty.
- ❑ Maury Kask advised that as the Coastal Ferry Service Contract scheduled service has been set to 2008, the operators are now moving forward.
- ❑ Brian Roe stated that:
 - Bella Coola will put Tourist Info Councilors on board Route 40 this year. This results in extended stay visitors, and
 - Bella Coola would appreciate branding opportunities /internet link.

c. Coordination at Prince Rupert between Route 10, Route 11, AMH services, VIA Rail, etc.;

- ❑ Pat Morris advised that this is a scheduling issue referred from Northern Consultation Meeting

d. Pricing of Cabins;

- ❑ Gary Leitch asked for feedback as to how much cabin prices can be increased; what are people willing to pay for future cabin services.
- ❑ Brian Roe asked if there has been a poll taken to ask passengers this question. Gordon said not that he was aware of.
- ❑ Ross Wilson again reminded of the aging population and the concern that all cabin increases are justified.
- ❑ Jennifer Case asked about the possibility of a resident off season cabin fee.
- ❑ Geoff Dickson said that hotel and ferry rates increase annually.
- ❑ Carol Kulesha suggested the rooms are always full because the demand exceeds the supply. She said that a 2% to 5% increase each year is logical.
- ❑ Larry Greba said that nominal increases are expected by all and can be tolerated to no more than 10% at a time.
- ❑ Older Klemtu residents need cabins; to assist seniors traveling he suggested that 2-4 rooms be blocked off, with a cut off for reserving them the week before.

- ❑ Maury Kask said that he will be traveling in the mid-coast in June and will be available to further discuss issues.

e. Customer Service Officer;

Ross Wilson asked if the new market strategy would include a Customer Service Officer?

- ❑ Gordon Nettleton said that he does not foresee the re-instatement of the customer service officer on Route 40.
- ❑ Kathy Nysten said that Bella Coola (through the assistance of a government grant) has an Info/tourist councilor student traveling once per week to promote the Route 40 communities.
- ❑ Julia Ferguson said that Route 10 has a formal agreement and has had student Info/tourist councillors on the *Queen of the North* for quite a few years.
- ❑ Jennifer Case was interested in Port Hardy putting Info/tourist Councilors on Route 40 also.

Action: Gordon Nettleton; Marlane Christensen; and Ross Wilson to discuss further possibilities. Gordon will present a formal report advising why the CSO is not being re-instated, if that is the case.

f. Publication of Northern Schedules to Southern System;

Kathy Nysten stated that she is concerned that Route 40 schedules are not available on southern routes at this late date.

Action: Gordon Nettleton and Maury Kask will check on schedule status.

g. Telephone Access (1 -800 numbers);

Maury Kask reported that BCFS is promoting migrating to a Single Service Number; telephone 800 service is available in Washington. Toll free access to North America and beyond is being investigated.

h. Marketing Strategy Development;

Gary Leitch said he proposes that BCFS play a catalytic role in;

- ❑ A potential marketing conference
- ❑ He advised that Maury Kask has agreed to attend a two-day workshop anywhere in the province, location TBD. Gary would like to know if the FAC saw value in this, and would FAC be willing to participate.
- ❑ Suggestion - to incorporate with the Northern Tourism AGM
- ❑ Suggestion - to incorporate it with the next FAC meeting
- ❑ Gary Leitch stated that he was waiting for feedback from the Northern Consultation meetings; he anticipated that there would be recommendations for more active co-operative marketing programs than in the past.

Action: This FAC committee supports a Tourism Marketing Strategy exercise this fall.

Marlane Christensen advised she is President of the Industry Council for Aboriginal Business and she may be contacted for information regarding First Nation's issues surrounding communications, building of relationships, aboriginal tourism issues, marketing etc.

Reservation System

- ❑ Maury Kask said that the schedules system needs re-vamping and changes are coming.
- ❑ Carol Kulesha asked how reservation space is held for commercial traffic. And why the Reservations Clerks will not tell how many people are on the waiting list so that they can make an informed decision regarding traveling. Ross Wilson would like to know why 10 vehicles are dropped off at Ocean Falls before arriving in McBay, and they are told there is no space. Gordon Nettleton said that:
 - these are space management issues.
 - there has been a significant improvement on Route 11 for the past two years. It used to be 40 – 50% traveled compared to 75 to 80% now.
 - Commercials are booked for next 3 months and managed on a month to month basis.
 - Suggestions:
 - Bella Bella receive a fax list of the # of off loads at
 - Ocean Falls so their waitlist vehicles may be handled.
 - Exact footage, be measured and paid for.
 - Future planning include the accurate size of vehicles
 - IV said he has a program for boat marina units
 -

Action: Gordon Nettleton requests that space issue problems be sent to him and he will provide an answer with a solution to specific issues.

- a. Separate Freight Service;
Combined commercial freight on barge service.
- b. What and How Statistics Are Gathered;
 - ❑ Carol Kulesha asked for stats on how many callers are lost because space is full and they are told they are on the waitlist.
 - ❑ Carol asked that tracking be kept of waitlist left behind and tracking of lost booking due to not being confirmed.

Action: Gordon Nettleton to investigate providing these statistics.

- c. What is Missing, How to Improve Waitlists;
As discussed.

Car Deck

- a. Car Deck Waiting List Management
As above.

Action: Submit concerns and issues to Gordon Nettleton and he will review and respond.

b. Freight Rates / Tariff For Commercial Trailers

Ross Wilson requested special freight rates for Bella Bella residents and designated space for Bella Bella freight.

Gordon Nettleton advised that:

- There are no plans to change the freight rate.
- This is a space management issue.
- Customers may pre-book with no penalty.

Scheduling

- ❑ Carol Kulesha would like the summer season for RT10/ RT 11 to commence May 24 through Thanksgiving.
- ❑ Gary Leitch says that they would be willing to extend the season but statistics have proven that there is a drastic drop in reservations in October.
- ❑ Carol Kulesha would like to know if in the shoulder season, any sailings were sold out; was there a pattern; why one is full and customer does not travel on the available sailing 5 days later.
- ❑ Gordon advised that this is space management allocation
- ❑ He stated that the Coastal Ferry Act declares that BCF provide 191 trips to the Queen Charlotte Islands per year.
- ❑ Gary Leitch advised that a strong statement must come from this committee regarding any changes and as the schedule is published two years in advance, any future changes must be decided soon.
- ❑ Brian Roe said that committee must be careful not using an old wish list. With the shift to the bottom line - dollars and cents; BCF need help with more than just what "is wanted".

Action: BCFS will provide to the FAC committee by September full details regarding traffic statistics for Routes 10, 11, and 40 for the past two years.

Action: FAC requests that the Reservation Supervisor attend the October meeting.

Action: Carol Kulesha requests Gordon Nettleton to provide a report of "left behind" stats on Route 11, starting immediately.

a. Additional Runs/ Additional Stops For Bella Bella;

- ❑ Ross Wilson requests that an additional run be provided for Bella Bella during the All Native Basketball tournament in Prince Rupert in February.
- ❑ Reminder that there are a set number of contracted runs per year.
- ❑ Gordon Nettleton will check into the possibility of shifting runs.

Action: Gordon Nettleton and Marlane Christensen will check the dates for tournament February 2005 and the possibility of altering the schedule to assist Bella Bella basketball attendees.

- b. Sequence of Stops Between Bella Bella and Ocean Falls;
 - ❑ Ross Wilson advised that there is more traffic getting off at Bella Bella and presently Bella Bella passengers pass by Bella Bella to stop at Ocean Falls and then return to off load Bella Bella customers.
 - ❑ Ross requests that the Bella Bella stop occurs before Ocean Falls.

Action: Gordon Nettleton will check on the sequence, distances, practicality of vessel regarding stopping at Bella Bella first; and will report back at the next meeting.

Public Consultation Process – Northern Strategy

- a. Gary Leitch reported that;
 - ❑ the draft deadline is June 04/04.
 - ❑ the final Northern Strategy document to the government will suggest 2008 – 2012 contract proposals.
- b. Community Round Table;

Gary said that this time was allocated to allow individuals time to raise issues not on the agenda. Open time for what is working, and what is not working.

Comments:

- ❑ Brian Roe;
 - Asked if the January 14, 2003 letter re-appointment of FAC members is still in effect.
 - Gary Leitch said that it was. Present members term run to the end of 2005 at which time new members will be appointed, or current ones reconfirmed.
 - Asked when the announcement regarding purchase of new vessels will occur.
 - Gary Leitch suggested that it is unknown when the government will make a decision. However, a decision is required soon to allow ships to be ordered in a timely manner.
 - Interesting to hear Rt 10/11 issues.
 - Tourism versus transportation view point.
 - Great to attend a meeting with such a positive attitude.
 - Would like to see the process continue.
 - Encourage community input in new ship design process.
- ❑ Carol Kulesha;
 - Need more stats.
 - Appreciate opportunity to attend meeting.
 - Ministry of Health announce possible new kind of assistance re the TAPS program. Improvement could be for food and cabins.
 - Availability of cabins for medical reasons necessary.
- ❑ David Crosby;
 - Asked about the BCF Federal subsidy which was put in place to assist northern communities in food service supply.
 - Said will be raising this issue with politicians.

- Gary Leitch said that if the entire \$24m was allocated to the North then the provincial \$ would be reduced to zero. The Coastal Ferry Act allocates provincial funds to cover funding gap. BCF cannot unilaterally change the funding formula.
- Larry Greba;
 - Good working relationship with Prince Rupert office,
 - Appreciation to Pat Morris and Rob Clarke,
 - Klemtu terminal sold to BCFS,
 - Service once every two weeks is difficult for fresh food supply,
 - QON can't stop due to configuration,
 - Need the CSO for Route 40 for walking tours, etc.,
 - Jobs are noticeably missed in the community, and
 - Request community involvement in new ship design.
- Marlane Christensen;
 - Working on Northern Strategy Klemtu feedback.
 - Working on formalization of an aboriginal strategy program.

6. Next Meeting:

- a. October 20, 2004

7. Meeting Adjourned: 15:45 p.m.

Brian Roe thanked all in attendance and to BC Ferry Services Inc.

Approved:

Captain Gordon Nettleton
Brian Roe, Chair

Date: June 17, 2004
Date: June 17, 2004

Attachments:

1. Action Summary

Action Items

#	Action Issue	Referred to:	Status
1.	<p>Secured parking at local sites (K2, McBay, Denny Island). Gordon Nettleton will check and advise in October, re the possibility of the construction of some secure parking area at the terminal or Bella Bella Fish Plant.</p>	Gordon Nettleton	
2.	<p>Shipboard Services: Hours of operation of services QPR/ Klemtu: Suggestions included: coffee & do-nuts; a vending machine service; or a kiosk offering refreshments. Gordon Nettleton to investigate and report back to Larry and/or Ben.</p>	Gordon Nettleton	
3.	<p>Health related transportation: Gordon Nettleton will check on wheel chair stateroom availability.</p>	Gordon Nettleton	
4.	<p>Customer Service Officer: Gordon Nettleton, Marlane Christensen and Ross Wilson to discuss further possibilities re CSO. Gordon Nettleton will submit a formal report advising why the CSO is not being re-instated, it that is the case.</p>	<p>Gordon Nettleton Marlane Christensen Ross Wilson</p> <p>Gordon Nettleton</p>	
5.	<p>Availability of Northern schedules on southern ships: Gordon Nettleton and Maury Kask to check on schedule status.</p>	Gordon Nettleton Maury Kask	
6.	<p>The FAC Supports a Tourism Marketing Strategy Exercise this fall.</p>	NS FAC	
7.	<p>Reservation Space Held for Commercial Traffic: Gordon Nettleton requests that specific space issue problems be sent to him so that he may provide an answer / solution to specific issues.</p>	NS FAC	
8.	<p>What and How Statistics are Gathered: Gordon Nettleton to investigate a tracking of waitlist left behind and a tracking of lost booking due to not being confirmed.</p>	Gordon Nettleton	

Action Items

#	Action Issue	Referred to:	Status
9.	Car Deck Waiting List Management: As specific concerns and issues are sent to Gordon Nettleton, he will review and respond.	NS FAC	
10.	Scheduling: BCFS will provide to the FAC committee by September 2004, full details regarding traffic statistics for Routes 10, 11 and 40 for the past two years.	Gordon Nettleton	
11.	Scheduling: NS FAC requests that the Reservation Supervisor attend the October Meeting.	Gordon Nettleton	
12.	Scheduling: Left Behind Stats: Carol Kulesha requests Gordon Nettleton to provide a report of "left behind" stats on Route 11, starting immediately.	Gordon Nettleton	
13.	Additional Runs/ stops for Bella Bella Gordon Nettleton and Marlane Christensen will check the dates for the All Native Basketball Tournament in Prince Rupert in February 2005 and the possibility of altering the schedule to assist basketball attendees.	Gordon Nettleton Marlane Christensen	
14.	Sequence of Stops between Bella Bella and Ocean Falls: Gordon Nettleton will check on the sequence, distances, practicality of vessel regarding stopping at Bella Bella first; and will report back at next meeting.	Gordon Nettleton	