

SOUTHERN SUNSHINE COAST FERRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

September 7, 2001

9:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.

Sechelt Municipal Hall

Attendees:

Committee

Ed Steeves, Chair
Jakob Knaus
Don Murray
Conchita Harding
Angela Letman
Allan Crane

BC Ferries

Bob Lingwood
Jeanette McKay
Captain Steve Graham
Gerry Parker
Gary Leitch
Deborah Dykes

1.0 Call to Order

Chair Steeves welcomed everyone to the inaugural meeting of the Southern Sunshine Coast Ferry Advisory Committee meeting. He explained how important BC Ferries is to the Sunshine Coast for residents commuting to Vancouver for work, for tourism which is a growing industry, and transportation of goods. He stated that on the whole, BC Ferries provides a good service, but it can be improved, and that the committee is pleased to work with the Corporation regarding its' service.

2.0 Introductions

Introductions were made by Gary Leitch and Ed Steeves:

Bob Lingwood – President and CEO

Jeanette McKay – Assistant Vice President, Mainland Services

Captain Steve Graham – Marine Superintendent, Mainland Services

Gerry Parker – Terminal Manager, Langdale

Gary Leitch – Manager, Stakeholder Relations

Deborah Dykes – Communications Coordinator

Ed Steeves – Councillor, District of Sechelt

Jakob Knaus – representative for Sechelt

Don Murray – Chair, Sunshine Coast Regional District

Allan Crane – representative, Sunshine Coast Regional District

Angela Letman – Councilor, Town of Gibsons

Conchita Harding – representative for Gibsons

3.0 Approval of Agenda (approved)

4.0 Previous Minutes (this is first meeting; no previous minutes)

5.0 Business Arising

Motion to appoint Ed Steeves as Chair of the Southern Sunshine Coast Ferry Advisory Committee made by Allan Crane, seconded by Don Murray. Motion carried.

Motion to appoint Ed Steeves and Jakob Knaus as this committee's representatives on BC Ferries' Coastal Council made by Allan Crane and seconded by Don Murray. Motion carried.

6.0 Delegations (no delegations)

7.0 Correspondence

A package of correspondence from the public was circulated. Motion to accept correspondence made by Don Murray, seconded by Angela Letman. Motion carried.

8.0 Communication

This committee is BC Ferries' 12th local ferry advisory committee and experience has shown that these groups provide the Corporation a great deal of information about what its customers want from their service. A discussion ensued about communication and the types of issues this committee would be dealing with. The committee wanted to ensure that they could create credibility with the public by discussing issues that are important to residents, such as tariff. The tariff issue will be discussed by all ferry advisory committees in the first quarter of next year. It is the government that ultimately sets BC Ferries' tariff and the corporation didn't want to create unrealistic expectations regarding this matter.

The process of decision making was raised. While consensus is desirable, BC Ferries stated that, if there are differing opinions from the committee members representing the public, it's important that both sides are brought to the Corporation's attention. Full and open discussions are an important part of this process. The committee understands its' role to be an advisory body, not a decision making entity.

Deborah Dykes will take the minutes of meetings and will arrange for them to be circulated widely in places such as the websites of the local governments and local libraries so that the public can be kept informed of the committee's activities.

BC Ferries does have a budget for advertising for important issues to notify the public.

9.0 Issues Identification and Classification

The Committee presented the following list (not in any order of priority) of items it would like to discuss with BC Ferries:

A. Local and Short Term

Service Levels:

- 1) Schedules – Use of additional vessel
- 2) Better connections to Route 2 – Nanaimo
- 3) Bad delays, sometimes even for the 6:20 a.m. sailing
- 4) At Horseshoe Bay, fill ships to capacity. Better flow of traffic to terminal
- 5) Late ferry sailing
- 6) Residents should be given loading privileges

Reservation System:

- 1) As a first step – reservations for small commercial vehicles
- 2) As a second step – for all vehicular traffic
- 3) Keep in mind connections from Route 7 (Saltery Bay) through Route 3 (Langdale)

Tariff Issues:

- 1) Current passenger card and commercial rates are too high and have to be reduced
- 2) Participants in school-based outings, or participating as a team in sports events on the Lower Mainland, should be allowed to travel free, the same as those from other ferry-dependent communities
- 3) For private travel, all students up to the age of 19 years with student cards, should be charged a concessionary fare (similar to Translink).

Pre-Paid Ticket Discounts (PPTD)

- 1) Our PPTD are far too low (28.4% for passengers and 17.8% for cars). Bowen Island (46.6% for passengers and 41.8% for cars). Over 700 of our commuters travel to the same place of work.
- 2) It is very desirable, essential and fair that discounts are the same percentage for all routes serving ferry-dependent communities of which the Sunshine Coast is the largest.

B. Local and Longer Term

- 1) Second pier upgrade to two tiers
- 2) Foot passenger service (fast service)

C. Corporate

- 1) Capital Plans
 - i) Ferry construction and replacement
 - ii) Financial projections

A discussion ensued about the categories of issues and level of involvement by this committee. Tariff, for example is a broad issue for the Corporation and can't be decided in isolation. It doesn't minimize the importance of the fare structure for this committee and the Sunshine Coast residents, but it can't be set independently.

Reservations were discussed and the committee didn't feel that 100% reservations would be a good idea but some level of reservations would be a benefit. BC Ferries explained that, with the Horseshoe Bay terminal project currently underway, reservations wouldn't be expanded to Route 3 at this time. For the Nanaimo run, the limit of reservations from the Horseshoe Bay side has been limited to 35 per sailing, as it is difficult to get the reserved traffic into the compound. BC Ferries doesn't want to offer a service to their customers that it is not able to fulfill. Significant investment in infrastructure would be required at the Langdale terminal to implement reservations from that side. Reservations for small businesses were discussed, as this can affect commerce on the Coast.

Priority boarding for residents was raised. It was suggested that this would be deterrent to tourists. The real issue is capacity at certain times, such as Friday nights from Horseshoe Bay.

The schedule was discussed at length. The suggestion for a late night sailing was raised and the committee will look at various scheduling options, within BC Ferries financial framework. Scheduling of the extra vessel for next summer can also allow creativity in the timetable. BC Ferries acknowledged that, at peak times, the Queen of Surrey is unable to keep to schedule and would like to make changes for next summer, with input from the committee about what residents want. The Corporation will be doing a post-mortem of the summer, and Captain Graham will bring some draft scheduling options to the committee for discussion when they are prepared around December.

Current conditions (sailing times, delays, overloads) are available the media and the general public on the website at www.bcferrries.com.

BC Ferries 15 Year Strategic Plan is currently before the government and will be presented to this committee in the future. This plan includes a building program for new vessels.

10.0 New Business (none)

11.0 Public Meeting

The committee would like to host a public meeting to get input from the residents of the Sunshine Coast about what issues residents want the committee to discuss with BC Ferries. The committee will host the meeting. Some representatives from BC Ferries will attend to listen to the community. It was decided that there would be two meetings; October 15, 7:30 p.m., and October

16 on the 6:20 a.m. ferry. The committee acknowledged that there wouldn't be a great deal of time on the ferry, but this would allow for commuters who may not be able to attend the evening meeting, to bring issues forward.

12.0 Next Meeting

The committee will meet again on November 1, 9:30 a.m. to discuss the issues raised at the public meetings.

13.0 Public Delegation

Mr. Bob Jones, former member of the Howe Sound/Sunshine Coast Advisory Committee wanted to make a presentation. Unfortunately time did not permit, and Mr. Jones agreed to submit his presentation in writing to the committee.

14.0 Meeting adjourned 11:15 a.m.

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| Approved by: | Captain Steve Graham | Date: September 17, 2001 |
| | Chair Ed Steeves | Date: September 18, 2001 |