

Ferry Advisory Committee (FAC) - Record of Meeting

Date:	May 18, 2018
Committee Name:	North & Central Coast
Routes:	10, 11, 26, 28

Attendees:

<p>For the FAC:</p> <p><i>Chair(s):</i> Greg Martin, Mark Schlichting (cc)</p> <p><i>Members</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travis Hall, Sharron Cartier, Fred Robertson • Pete Kovanda, Elizabeth Aman-Hume • Darren Edgar, Michelle Pineault • Barry Cunningham, Devin Rachar 	<p>For BCF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff West • Peter Simpson, • David Hendry • Hardeep Grewal, • Darin Guenette
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Points of Information/Agreement:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. BC Ferries overview. An overview was given on the government review underway, fare discounts, the Performance Term 5 process, fuel costs rising and possible near future reduction/elimination in the current fuel rebate, near record traffic levels and reservations/website changes upcoming. Some general discussion followed, with a focus on long waitlists/no-show fees for northern sailings. New 'route reports' have been sent to the FAC in advance to provide info/data on many operational issues, and asks for suggestions for change. 2. School sports team subsidy. There have been previous discussions about how to get fare assistance for school sports. David clarified that there is currently a discount for school related activities for all Northern routes, and he recommended this policy be shared with schools that may not be aware. 3. Education/training requirements. Haida Gwaii is seeking a list of what education/training needs potential employees could learn about. Darin will connect Greg with the BC Ferries Recruitment Manager. 4. Reservation system update. BC Ferries has replaced their reservation system over recent months, and have been using the new system for bookings for months. The redeemable part of system will begin later in May. Discussion also happened around the delays at the Call Centre, and how the wait times are now decreasing to reasonable levels. 5. Route 28 update. After a delay, the direct service is now set to begin July 20 from Port Hardy and operate until October 11. The Nimpkish will deliver Central Coast service from June 19 to July 19. Work on the Northern Sea Wolf is progressing well, and there are still high-level plans to host some sort of basic ceremony in each community when local sea trials are happening. Also, adjustments/upgrades have been completed at docks where
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the vessel will visit.

It was clarified that the Sea Wolf will provide regular mid-Coast connector service during the off-peak seasons, keeping the same schedule that Nimpkish has served during those periods. Note that the Nimpkish will still be available to relieve for the Sea Wolf if/when that ship needs to come out of service during the off-season.

6. Two-ferry solution. Previous submissions from the Cariboo-Chilcotin Tourism group had been made with the Province to consider a two-ferry service for the mid-Coast. Also, mid-week service between the Central Coast and Port Hardy is lacking and would benefit the economies and tourism sectors greatly. BC Ferries noted that adding mid-week sailings involves significant expenses, and therefore involving the Province in that discussion important.
7. BC Ferries ‘info forum’. The Bella Bella community has been working on a variety of tourism-enhancing initiatives and are interested in hosting an information forum to promote what tourism opportunities are available for tourism; idea was to consider combining the fall FAC meeting in Bella Bella and combine it with the community forum.
8. FAC term and reappointment. The current FAC term ends December 31, so BC Ferries will be rebuilding all committees beginning later this summer/fall. A reminder that there is a two-term limit. If FAC members have ideas/suggestions for groups to include, please send to BCF.
9. On board tourism reps. There is interest in getting ‘tourism reps/ambassadors’ on the Northern vessels, primarily in Peak season.
10. Tourism P.Rupert report. A report was produced by Tourism Prince Rupert with four main recommendations around ferry services in the region. The suggestion was for FAC members to read this report, but there was one recommendation around FAC membership. This was that there needed to be ‘tourism reps’ directly on the committee. However, the FAC believed that the current members represent the tourism voice well, but it may be a good idea to invite one rep from Tourism Northern BC or Destination BC.
11. SSR. A request was submitted to extend a winter (off-peak) rate for mid-Coast residents that is currently available for sailings to travel to Bella Coola. Darin accepted the SSR.
12. Schedule publishing. Tourism operators need to see sailings schedules set much earlier, as they are coordinating bookings at least at least 6-12 months in advance. Peter Simpson to send Marketing contact info to Elizabeth and Peter Kovanda.
13. Overnight parking at Bear Cove. Elizabeth is requesting a continuing summary of the numbers of customers parking overnight in Bear Cove during summer 2018.
14. Shoulder season fares. Travis relayed an experience of a customer thinking they recently paid more than previous years...he will send details to Darin.

Action Items¹:

Item	Who	By When
1. Send Greg contact info for Recruitment Manager.	Darin	By June
2. Provide FAC with a basic summary of reservation take-up for the direct service thus far.	Peter/Darin	Completed.
3. Submit letter to the Heiltsuk requesting that the fall meeting be hosted in Bella Bella.	Greg/Mark/ Darin	Completed.

¹ Significant Service Request (SSR) requiring detailed analysis and formal decisions from BCF should be submitted using the SSR process. Submission of a SSR should be noted as an Action Item.

4. Explore options for on board ambassadors with Janet, after receiving email from Elizabeth.	Darin	summer
5. Let Elizabeth know 'summer 2018 overnight parking' numbers.	Jeff	end of summer