

**Meeting Details**

Date: June 17, 2019  
Time: 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm  
Location: BC Ferries Head Office – Suite 500-1321 Blanshard Street

**Attendance**

***Public Interest Representatives***

Hugh Mitchell, Canadian Hard of Hearing Association  
Les Chan, Disability Resource Centre  
Marnie Essery, Intermunicipal Advisory Committee on Disability Issues  
Pat Danforth, Disability Alliance BC  
Barbara Schuster, CNIB  
Julie Gray, Seniors Serving Seniors

***BC Ferries Representatives***

Karen Tindall, Director of Customer Care, Customer Care Department  
Captain Chris Frappell, Marine Superintendent, Vessel Replacement Program  
Chris Gauld, Manager, Terminal Standards, Terminal Engineering  
Darin Guenette, Manager, Public Affairs  
Stephen Nussbaum, Superintendent, Customer Service Standards  
Bruce Paterson, Fleet Technical Director, Engineering  
Garnet Renning, Customer Service & Sales Representative, Customer Care

***Guest***

Cheryl Forsyth, Customer Relations, Customer Care

***Regrets***

Debbie Yorker, Seniors Serving Seniors  
Steve Shardlow, Training Manager, Terminals  
David Carroll, Director, Terminal Construction, Engineering  
Jeff Davidson, Director, Retail Services, Food and Retail Operations  
Melanie Lucia, Director, Catering and Terminal Operations

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## **Introduction**

Co-Chair Karen Tindall welcomed the members of the committee.  
Review of Minutes – November 29, 2018 meeting. Minutes approved by the committee.

### ***Action Items for the next meeting:***

1. Bruce Paterson will update the group on the transition strip highlighting a tripping hazard from the inside deck to the outside deck on board the *Coastal Celebration* has been installed.
2. Stephen Nussbaum to check at major terminals if our public address systems/zones may need a tune-up and into the signage improvements at Horseshoe Bay.

### **Updates from the Public Interest Representatives**

Karen Tindall – Updates on Action Items:

1. Karen advised that there are two types of video technology on all of the vessels at this time except for the *Northern Sea Wolf*.
2. Karen has checked in with Mel Lucia and the Chief Stewards have confirmed that the automatic doors for the restrooms on Deck 6 of the Spirit Class vessels were upgraded during their recent midlife upgrades.

#### *Pat Danforth*

Pat updated the group on the recent third reading of the Accessibility Canada Act – this will be no later than June 21<sup>st</sup>. The Act is about creating communities, workplaces and services that enable everyone to participate fully in society without barriers. The Government of Canada will continue to work with persons with disabilities and the disability community, as well as with provinces, territories, towards the realization of an accessible Canada. The legislation will benefit everyone in Canada, especially persons with disabilities. It was mentioned that BC Ferries mirrors this along with Transport Canada. Karen asked Pat to send in any significant changes or new items to the group.

#### *Barbara Schuster*

Barbara advised the group that their office has recently relocated to 1675 Douglas Street and are currently getting settled in. They will be offering more programs for clients (e.g. music and dancing). Their AGM will be held next Wednesday at 1:00pm at the Salvation Army Citadel.

#### *Les Chan*

No update or new information at this time.

### *Marnie Essery*

Marnie shared that she is attending focus groups and will continue to be an advocate for what passengers would like to see on the BC Ferries' vessels and terminals which she has shared with the group and will continue to share more information as she receives it. Marnie updated the group that she recently had the occasion to travel with BCF and appreciated the good communication and courteous service from BCF employees at the terminal. A few areas that could use some improvements were: restrooms (soap/towelling), baggage area (better signage) and a suggestion of designated accessible seating areas on the vessels.

Marnie also shared some feedback regarding the *Queen of New Westminster* as she had some difficulties finding an accessible restroom (limited signage), she suggested that the vessels have an accessible restroom on every deck, she wasn't impressed with the poor cleanliness and overall state of the restrooms. The other item that is concerning is that there is no signage on the accessible restroom door indicating that the door will swing in when you are manoeuvring to get out of the restroom. Marnie asked if there are any vessels that have sliding pocket doors in case of emergencies, Bruce advised that on the Salish vessels there are, Spirit Class vessels on deck 5 and acknowledged that it is challenging on the *Queen of New Westminster* with it being an older vessel.

Marnie updated the group that she is taking part in hosting the Annual picnic in Metchosin on June 27, she shared posters with the group and invited the group to attend.

## **Updates from BC Ferries**

### **Terminal Update:**

Stephen Nussbaum reviewed the range of comments regarding loading practices over the last 6 months and they continue to remain very consistent with previous time periods. He shared that most are positive with the top positive comment being – booking/reserving wheelchair assistance and with only 4 comments being negative. One the main concerns was vehicle placement near an elevator.

Stephen shared a few one-off comments with the group:

- heavy doors on vessels and sills;
- unable to book wheelchair service on-line;
- SPARC pass isn't recognized at BCF;
- suggestion of wheelchair service (pushing assistance should be offered to the bus stop in the terminal areas once off the vessel);
- assumption that the TAP program includes Medical Assured Loading, misinformation and confusion; and
- Departure Bay – too long of a distance to walk to the long-term parking lot.

In summary Stephen shared that the biggest issue appear to be how BCF loads and places vehicles on the deck and in the vicinity of the elevators. Stephen also

shared that BCF is in the process of attaching RFDI tags on all of the wheelchairs for efficiency of use and logistics, this may take some time to complete as our IT area has many competing priorities right at the moment.

1:55pm – the group had a 15 minute break

2:10pm – the meeting reconvened

### **Vessel Development Update:**

Bruce Paterson shared that BCF is in the process of public consultations regarding new major vessels and developing shipboard specific lists. At this point we have received a total of approximately 20,000 comments which is an excellent response and strong input from the public. Bruce advised that he has been given direction to be more open with shipyards to be inclusive to any new ideas/suggestions. Bruce will be looking at getting RFP's out this upcoming August to an expanded list of shipyards. New construction is taking place on four out of five new vessels which will be called the 'Island Class' of vessels, these vessels will begin service around February 2020. The first two Island Class vessels will be deployed on the Powell River – Texada Island route and the Port McNeill – Alert Bay – Sointula route by mid-2020. The third and fourth new vessels will service the Campbell River – Quadra Island route and the fifth and sixth new ships will serve the Nanaimo Harbour – Gabriola route by 2022. The Spirit class vessels have both completed their mid-life upgrades and feedback has been very positive.

Pat mentioned that she has noticed the improvements to the tactile cues in the elevators and the number of power outlets have been improved as well. Brief discussion of child safety standards and Bruce asked the group for any thoughts/ideas/feedback/suggestions for children with disabilities travelling on our vessels.

Chris Frappell provided an update for the *Spirit of Vancouver Island* which returned to service on April 18 from its midlife upgrade and is operating efficiently on LNG. The *Northern Sea Wolf* conducted successful trials and dock fits and entered service on May 18. The first vessel of the Island Class ferries is scheduled to arrive in the last months of 2019, and planned to enter service in 2020.

### **Terminal Development Update:**

Chris Gauld advised that many Terminal Development Plans (TDP) are underway and they are just about to start the Crofton public engagement. Campbell River TDP is ongoing and almost ready to submit to the Master Plan committee, Nanaimo/Gabriola is underway and Swartz Bay/Horseshoe Bay are our larger TDP's. Darin Guenette shared that we are also conducting public consultations/engagement through our website, currently Horseshoe Bay first (planned for August and September) and then Swartz Bay.

From a project perspective, Chris advised that the Prince Rupert trestle will require more interface upgrading. Langdale – finalizing the overhead walkway plans and pre-construction is planned for this upcoming Fall, just waiting on BC Ferry Commissioner final approval. Chris mentioned that he has reviewed the BC Building code and CSA along with continued engagement with a variety of consultants (involved with the Rick Hansen Society) to assist with upgrades and designs at our terminals. The ultimate goal is to produce a standard for both the ticket booth and parking areas in our operation.

### **Other Business:**

Marnie made a comment that the passenger announcements are difficult to hear at the terminal, Stephen advised that most announcements are pre-recorded and BCF is aware that clarity of the employee's voice is an important factor and is a focus during employee training. Marnie also brought to the group's attention that she thinks signage should be reviewed/possible room for improvement for passengers turning around in the terminal etc. BCF has expanded its digital signboards which will certainly help.

Pat asked about a current Human Rights case with BCF regarding a service dog. No update or further discussion, possibly an updated will be available at the next meeting.

Barb inquired about the passenger door/black button on the Salish vessels when opening the doors – is there any possibility of changing the color to something more easily visible? BCF advised this is a vessel standard item.

Chris asked the group if they would expect to use wheelchair assist ramps in buildings independently or would the members have some assistance? The group consensus was that you would have someone assist when using assist ramps. Chris advised that the *Northern Sea Wolf* has a ramp/lift to use in case of the elevator not functioning. This ramp is a device that is on a track device and BCF does require a crew member (who is trained) to assist.

**Meeting Adjourned: 3:00 pm**

### **Next Meeting Date:**

Monday, November 25, 2019