

Ferry Advisory Committee (FAC) - Record of Meeting

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| Date: | October 25, 2017 |
| Committee Name: | North & Central Coast |
| Routes: | 10, 11, 26, 28 |

Attendees:

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| <p>For the FAC:</p> <p><i>Chair(s):</i> Greg Martin</p> <p><i>Members</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travis Hall, Sharron Cartier • Pete Kovanda, Elizabeth Aman-Hume • Darren Edgar, Michelle Pineault • Barry Cunningham, Ana Santos • Fred Robertson (cc), Mark Schlichting (cc) | <p>For BCF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark Collins, Mark Wilson • Corrine Storey, Jeff West • Peter Simpson, David Hendry • Hardeep Grewal, Janet Carson • Alana Gallagher, Irwin Martinez • Cynthia Lukaitis • Darin Guenette |
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Points of Information/Agreement:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Route 28 – <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. fam tours – FAC suggestion to include familiarization tour to showcase new ship/services. Janet noted BCF will plan some sort of open house (likely in the first two weeks of June) in the communities it is serving, if possible. As well, BCF would plan to coordinate a media/tour operators fam tour, but date is not known yet. ii. Racking material space will be available on board and is managed by Certified folders. iii. Marketing efforts. BCF works in collaboration with Chilcotin-Cariboo & Vancouver Island Tourism associations to market the route as part of larger tourism opportunities. Marketing efforts will likely begin in February 2018. BCF noted that approximately 2.5 weeks of training is done with call centre staff (including visits to the area if possible) on how the North and Central Coast routes/bookings operate. iv. Online schedule presentation. There are currently no sailing times scheduled for Route 10S, and BCF will ensure the timing of stops for Bella Bella/Ocean Falls/Shearwater are clear to customers. BCF noted that the contract is written to coordinate connections between the mid-Coast and Port Hardy (Route 10), which happens at Bella Bella; this does not allow a direct sailing to Bella Coola from Ocean Falls. Related: The Northern Sea Wolf is just preparing to leave Greece soon, and when it arrives in BC, it will undergo extensive upgrades to prepare it for service next summer. Note that BC Ferries plans to keep on food services during the off-peak, but this depends on the levels of usage as well. 2. Haida Gwaii customer survey – Seeing evening service restored on Route 26 has come out as a primary concern for Haida Gwaii communities. Other notable issues included: freight delays/back-up, dissatisfaction with the call-in reservation system (agents are unfamiliar |
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and people on waitlists generally still get on their desired sailing). BCF noted there is new (internal) reservation system that should improve accuracy of bookings. Although BC Ferries has recently increased commercial no-show fees, there has not been much affect with these customers booking and not arriving for sailings. Discussion ensued to explore the idea of changing the penalty for a commercial 'no-show' to be loss of full fare.

As well, customers without cabins have noted that lighting is too high during the nights and the temperature too cold. Added to this, communities would like to see the Aurora lounge opened during the off-peak season. However, BC Ferries noted that the lounge is closed during low traffic periods, as this allows a reduction of crewing levels and lowers costs.

BC Ferries noted they are working at streamlining the cabin check-in process, possibly getting customers their cabin keys at the same time as check-in. As well, the need to arrive two hours prior to sailing time is required to allow proper loading and safe preparation for sailing. However, BC Ferries added that perhaps there are ways to improve the customer experience at the terminal prior to loading the vessel. FAC suggests that any communication efforts BC Ferries can provide to help explain why the two-hour check-in is required would be valuable. Ideas were discussed for how to improve efficiency of checking people on and off the vessels.

Off-terminal parking is still seen as an important need at Skidegate. BCF noted that the parking availability in the terminal is not being used to capacity. A lack of outlets for customers to plug in devices is noticeable.

BC Ferries is exploring providing educational entertainment services (such as carving demos, soap-making, nature talks, etc) on board the northern routes, so customers have more options during their journey.

3. Route 26 community events – BCF has added a sailing Oct 27 leaving Alliford Bay at 8 pm to accommodate a special event.
4. Route 10 issues. Community concerns have been brought forth around changing weekend sailings between Saturday and Sunday, and BC Ferries noted that these changes were only a temporary change during Prince Rupert dock upgrades, which will end Dec 14. After that time, the traditional schedule will remain in place. As for weather cancellations, BC Ferries almost always reschedules sailings that were not able to be performed due to inclement weather.

FAC noted that there are problems with customers booking standard vehicles when there is still room available for overweight (which they sometimes book just to get on a sailing).

5. Role of FAC members. Travis noted that sometimes community members experience misguided expectations of the role of FAC members. BCF will work on helping clarify the Terms of Reference and communication options to reach out to BCF.
6. Terminal upgrades. The upgrades happening at Route 28 terminals in order to prepare for the entry into service of the Northern Sea Wolf will not affect service except at Ocean Falls. At that terminal, there is a plan to provide alternate service over a four-week period next Feb/March, and this will be discussed at an October 30 public event in Ocean Falls.
7. Bear Cove overnight parking. BC Ferries noted that the average usage for overnight parking at Bear Cove this past summer was approximately 4.5 vehicles per night. Elizabeth will share this info with campground operators.
8. Vessel ops update: Northern Expedition will proceed on an annual refit April 1, 2018 and be back prior to summer service. Kwuna refit is currently proceeding well and is expected to return to service Nov 26. Related: the current Route 26 pilot, which added sailings

during certain days, are going well, expect that crews are not fitting in required drills now. Thus, BCF planning to cancel the Sunday morning first return trip in order to allow drills.

9. Terminal ops update: just a reminder that the work happening at Prince Rupert is to upgrade the structures (better waiting room, seating on trestle, widen the trestle, etc).
10. Marketing and local artist opportunities. FAC hears that local artists have sought a more streamlined, accessible option to get their products on vessels. Alternatively, there may be a way to communicate artists/galleries available for visitors who are leaving the vessel in Northern communities. Related: there is a program called Northern Speakers, which may provide speakers to come on vessels and provide narrative for guests.
11. Smoke-free policy. BCF will be implementing smoke-free policy across all vessels/terminals January 18, 2018. There may be some unique challenges with Northern routes, as crew and passengers are on board for long periods. BC Ferries is asking for assistance from FAC and community members on helping communicate this policy and why it is important. BCF has already had programs in place to help employees who smoke and may have difficulty working on board without smoking. FAC suggests that there may be an opportunity to tailor communications for the longer Northern routes, thoroughly explaining the reasoning and sending a 'we are in this together' message.
12. Alliford Bay terminal development plan. Engagement sessions are happening November 1 (4-7 pm) in both Sandspit and Queen Charlotte to share info and seek input on terminal development plans for both Route 26 terminals. Ads and an article in the local paper are helping promote these events. As well, an online survey is live until November 18 to seek input from any community members.
13. Update on BCF-Province discussions. BC Ferries and Ministry personnel have been meeting to discuss changes (fare decreases, increase to seniors discount, etc) announced by the Province. The Ministry has been asking for information/data behind BC Ferries' operations and BC Ferries will continue to work with them and the Commissioner to ensure relationships are productive. Note that the Commissioner regularly reviews various aspects of BC Ferries' operations, and these reports are publicly available. In a related manner, BCF notes that all shipbuilding options are open to any/all Canadian yards to bid for the work. The company evaluates all bids with a consideration of how/if this affects the customer (i.e. fare implications, etc).

Action Items¹:

| Item | Who | By When |
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| 1. Work with Web Services to include departure/arrival times on Rte 28 onlines schedules for Bella Bella/Ocean Falls/Shearwater. | Peter | Completed |
| 2. Investigate options to reset commercial no-show fee, such that the frequency of no-shows will dramatically decrease. | Alana/Janet | End-2017 |
| 3. Work with Northern crews on minimizing lighting/cooling during nights on vessels, and options around keeping the Aurora lounge during the off-peak season. | Hardeep/Corrine | End-2017 |
| 4. Explore options for increasing power outlet availability on Northern Adventure. | Corrine | Prior to next meeting |

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.

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| <p>5. Look at refreshing Terms of Reference and improving awareness for how communities can communicate with BCF.</p> | <p>Darin/Mark W.</p> | <p>Prior to next meeting</p> |
| <p>6. Work with Route 26 FAC members to discuss options to fit in crew drills; possibly by cancelling first round-trip Sundays.</p> | <p>Hardeep/Peter</p> | <p>During the winter</p> |
| <p>7. Coordinate ideas on how to engage local artist options, reaching out to FAC members for input.</p> | <p>Corrine/Janet</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> |
| <p>8. Work on tailoring smoke-free communications messages for northern routes.</p> | <p>Janet/Deb</p> | <p>Prior to Jan 22</p> |