

# Salt Spring Island Ferry Advisory Committee

## May 2022 Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, May 3, 2022, 4:30 pm – 7 pm  
Salt Spring Legion Branch #92

### Meeting Purpose

1. **Share information by providing the Ferry Advisory Committee with:**
  - Updates on corporate and route-specific activities, plans and projects
  - Answers and updates on route-specific questions and concerns
  
2. **Hear feedback and initiate action by:**
  - Hearing from the Ferry Advisory Committee about potential solutions to areas of concern
  - Generating trackable action items and next steps to address areas of concern raised by the Ferry Advisory Committee
  
3. **Increase transparency and accountability by providing a public venue where:**
  - Community members can observe and hear the information and feedback exchanged between BC Ferries and the Ferry Advisory Committee
  - Actions and solutions to concerns can be identified, recorded, tracked and reported

Topic	Time
Intros and welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Note: introduce new BC Ferries representatives and re-acquaint all attendees.</li> <li>• Approval of agenda</li> </ul>	10 mins
<b>Information section</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. BC Ferries Operational updates               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marine superintendent</li> <li>• Terminals</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. FAC review and enhancements</li> <li>3. New Customer Experience team</li> <li>4. Website update</li> </ol>	10 mins
<b>Discussion section</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Crewing concerns.</li> <li>2. Service levels and capital improvements.</li> <li>3. Methods of calculating/predicting future demand and contingency plans as demand increases.</li> <li>4. Update on scheduling plans for Salish Raven and Route 9/9a effects</li> <li>5. Status of prospect of commercial traffic on DG sailings on Route 6.</li> <li>6. Protected COVID lounge on Skeena.</li> <li>7. Camera locations at Fulford and Vesuvius.</li> <li>8. Possibility of increased daily sailings on Routes 4 and 6.</li> </ol>	2 hours
Final questions and close	10 mins

**Attached: Meeting topic log**

# Salt Spring Island Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting Topic Log May 2022

**NOTE:** notes summarizing the general discussion of meeting participants is included in the appropriate section of each agenda item in the table below.

Text in black was information sent to all meeting invitees prior to the meeting as part of the agenda. Text in blue are notes taken during the meeting as each item was discussed. Text in red captures a follow up action and parties responsible.

### Meeting attendees:

BC Ferries: Brian Anderson, Capt Hardeep Grewal, Darin Guenette, Cam Hillis, Karen Johnston, Jordan Knutsen, Jessalyn Kovacs, Natalie McCall, Tamara Olson, Peter Simpson

Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure: Kirk Handrahan

FAC: Gary Holman, Kirk Karaszkiwicz, Darryl Martin, Rob Pingle, Catherine Samson, Mike Stacey, Alan Sturgess, Harold Swerienga, Dave Toynbee, John Wakefield

Information Section	
Marine Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capt Hardeep Grewal (Hardeep.grewal@bcferries.com) is the Marine Superintendent for the region, including Routes 4, 6 and 9.</li> <li>• Quinsam working well on Route 6; some initial berth adjustments were required.</li> <li>• Vessel refits upcoming: Quinsam; October 24 – December 12, 2022, and Quinitisa will provide relief service during this refit. BCF is looking at possibility of having Mayne Queen, but currently this is not the plan due to crewing challenges.</li> </ul>
Terminals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cam Hillis (camrin.hillis@bcferries.com) is the Regional Terminal Operations Manager based in Swartz Bay, and is responsible for managing issues related to these routes. Jessalyn Kovacs is a Terminal Operations Manager managing teams at island terminals.</li> <li>• Currently hiring and training employees for traffic control at terminals.</li> <li>• Septic field repairs upcoming at Fulford, with a potential replacement.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCF has placed a portable washroom at Crofton for when the public bathroom is not available or is closed.</li> </ul>
<p>Update on FAC review and enhancements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commissioner has completed her formal review of the FAC process and is expected to release a report in May.</li> <li>• Meanwhile, BC Ferries is working with FAC Chairs to identify areas of improvement to the FAC process, with the most recent meeting on April 20.</li> <li>• BCF continues to work with FAC Chairs on:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Increased communication and more opportunities to meet with the FAC membership</li> <li>○ Enhancements to recruitment and onboarding processes</li> <li>○ Review and refresh of Terms of Reference</li> <li>○ Providing more, and more meaningful information to FACs, e.g. route data and performance stats, upcoming projects and plans</li> <li>○ Earlier involvement of FAC in planning and projects</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Enhanced reporting on actions taken as a result of FAC feedback</li> <li>• BC Ferries has developed new route reports, with various information on operations and other issues related to the FAC routes. Q3 reports will be sent to the FAC shortly, and all feedback is welcomed.</li> </ul>
<p>Introducing the new Customer Experience team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BC Ferries has introduced a new Customer Experience team as part of our Marketing Department</li> <li>• This team is focused on identifying and solving common customer pain points across our system</li> <li>• They monitor customer feedback mechanisms, e.g. customer care feedback tracking, feedback from Ferry Advisory Committee members etc. to identify common pain points and then work to bring the right departments together to find and implement solutions</li> <li>• Natalie McCall is the Customer Experience Manager for Routes 4, 6 &amp; 9.</li> <li>• FAC noted the importance of having accurate and timely information if/when sailings are adjusted/cancelled.</li> <li>• Feedback on the website continues to come to BC Ferries and frequent changes are introduced at regular periods, and any tips/comments people can share on communications flow in the community can help BC Ferries understand how to get information out better.</li> </ul>
<p>BC Ferries website and app development: current conditions page, app launch date</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent changes have been made to the Current Conditions site, where Departure/Arrival, webcams and ferry-tracking features all brought under the CC menu. Next steps include pulling information found on separate webpages all together on the CC page.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frequent website upgrades are made as part of regular revisions. These revisions batch changes together in a priority sequence.</li> <li>• The launch of a mobile is set for fall 2022, with beta testing scheduled for summer.</li> <li>• Development of a BC Ferries app continues to progress and should provide noticeable efficiency for customers in finding information. Success with the app will then allow us to apply some features that can improve/streamline the main website.</li> </ul>
<b>Discussion Section</b>	
Crewing concerns on Routes 4, 6 and 9 (BCF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAC looking for updates from BC Ferries on expectations around near-future crewing status (possible shortages, etc.)</li> <li>• Questions about resource planning that will allow crew to be available to react to increasing demand (particularly on Route 4) with supplemental vessels/sailings if possible.</li> <li>• BC Ferries' plans for crew resources are focused on fulfilling the current planned service. The logistics on longer-term supplementary Route 4 or 6 service has not been assessed, but include: which side to homeport vessels, berth availability, ship availability, and financial costs/resources.</li> <li>• Harold asks if one option when crew shortages (depending on the crew position) occur is to sail on a reduced passenger capacity license. BC Ferries replied that this is already the practice and cancellations only happen when crew available is not sufficient to comply with the lowest license level required.</li> <li>• A recent situation was explained, when BC Ferries announced cancellations, but then did find suitable crew to meet sailing license afterwards.</li> <li>• Mariner shortages have been happening in recent years, and we have had mitigations in place to react for some time. However, what is different/new is the effect of COVID positive tests. This continues to have lasting and significant effects and BC Ferries is unsure what 'long-COVID' effects may bring to this problem.</li> <li>• It is important to note that each ship has different crewing/licensing requirements.</li> <li>• BC Ferries has various training and development processes and programs; cadet programs for those under training, internal training paths and more. Approximately \$28 million is invested in training and advancement programs each year, and we continue to look for any options to recruit and hire employees via any means.</li> <li>• Rob noted that the local School District can support connecting students to opportunities at BC Ferries.</li> </ul>
FAC objectives regarding service levels and capital improvements (Harold)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAC seeks update on current plans for vessel deployment on all three routes, and terminal improvement work.</li> <li>• Route 4 and 6 overloads standout in the latest traffic data of BC Ferries 'route reports'.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Route 6 just received a larger vessel, so this may help lessen the overloads somewhat. However, Route 4 has capacity problems and the long-mentioned problem of traffic backing up the roadway and causing one-way traffic flow points to a bad problem worsening.</li> <li>• The FAC suggestion was to consider adding a supplemental vessel to Route 4, starting in peak season. Route 6 terminal overhauls in the next 5 years will help, and at it makes sense to introduce two Island Class ships on Route 6 at the same time, as this would require 'less lot expansion' than replacing Quinsam with a larger ship.</li> <li>• BC Ferries continues to look at options/feasibility for supplemental service on all routes, including these routes.</li> <li>• Discussion followed around if BC Ferries would advance plan to introduce two Island Class vessels on Route 6 since the plan is to make terminal changes in 2028. BC Ferries advised this is part of larger discussion with the Ministry of Transportation &amp; Infrastructure as part of Performance Term 6 (PT6) analysis and negotiations.</li> <li>• The ministry representative advised PT6 analysis requires a longer term look at the whole ferry network, focusing on all needed investments. The Minister needs to seek support from Cabinet for increases to service fee funding, and there are a number of competing funding needs.</li> <li>• Route 4: Skeena Queen continues service until 2041 planned retirement; vessel replacing Skeena Queen is TBD at this time.</li> <li>• Route 6: Quinsam slated for retirement in 2035, with plan to introduce two Island Class vessels.</li> <li>• Route 9: Salish Class vessels will continue to provide service longer-term, with retirements planned around 2060.</li> <li>• BC Ferries is still in discussion with Federal government with respect to funding shore charging infrastructure to allow current Island Class ships to upgrade to full-electric capability.</li> <li>• No terminal expansion for Fulford Harbour are in the current capital plan.</li> </ul>
<p>Methods of calculating/predicting future demand for capacity on Routes 4 and 6, and contingency plans as demand increases (Darryl)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does BC Ferries predict future traffic trends/data for the purposes of fleet planning?</li> <li>• BC Ferries utilizes a variety of methodologies when developing forecasts for traffic on the Minor Routes. In general they fall into three broad categories: Historical Traffic Trends, Population Based Models, and more detailed Econometric Models.</li> <li>• Historical Traffic Trends were used in the Performance Term 5 Submission, as the historical traffic trends were in line with the forecasts generated by the more detailed MIDAS forecasts for Major route traffic.</li> <li>• Population Based Models were used to support the Terminal and Vessel Development Plans used by Engineering, as they were deemed the more reasonable models to support</li> </ul>

	<p>the considerations of developing a terminal (e.g. want to make sure were developing for the higher range of forecasts).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAC suggests the traffic modelling used by BC Ferries in 2015 to support the decision to deploy the Quinitsa to Route 6 was not effective, and the Salt Spring Chamber is offering to provide local knowledge to improve BC Ferries forecasting models.</li> <li>• BC Ferries is open to accepting any local insight/information, and discussion followed around how to keep refining the methods used in traffic forecasts and incorporating this into capacity planning.</li> <li>• In other cases, we have developed and built more detailed economic models which included other variables, with consideration to the main industries in the areas serviced by the minor routes. For example tourism, lumber etc.</li> </ul>
<p>Update on scheduling plans for Salish Heron and effects on Route 9/9a (Gary)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAC is seeking a summary of results of Rte 5/5a scheduling analysis, when a Salish vessel will replace Mayne Queen, and if that changes anything with Route 9 service. <i>i.e. has BC Ferries settled on a schedule with Salish introduction? Are enhanced schedules still being considered, that may improve Route 9 service? Changes that enhance service for SGI and Route 9 service would be beneficial.</i></li> <li>• BC Ferries confirmed that after a Salish is introduced to replace the Mayne Queen in the fall schedule adjustments will be assessed. Until then, there will not be changes to the Route 5/5a sailing schedules.</li> </ul>
<p>Status of prospect of commercial traffic on DG sailings on Route 6 (Harold)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAC looking for update on where BC Ferries efforts are towards carrying non-DG vehicles on DG sailings, and thus clearing space on busier sailings.</li> <li>• We have recently re-hired a manager from retirement, who starts next week and will be working on addressing operational challenges that need to be met to allow a consistent process for all routes (updates to follow – likely 3 to 6 months).</li> <li>• Challenges include: if/how to reserve these customers on DG sailings, what to do at unstaffed terminals, incentivizing/communicating with customers, etc.</li> <li>• Mike noted that commercial vehicles would likely move to the DG sailings if this space becomes available.</li> <li>• Cam noted that we are working on the fine logistical points involved, and considering a way to operate a pilot (Route 6 may be a good target).</li> </ul>
<p>Protected COVID lounge on Skeena (Catherine)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is it possible to dedicate one lounge for mandatory face covering while COVID is still prevalent? <i>This could apply to Skeena Queen or Quinsam.</i></li> <li>• Immunocompromised people are still challenged in public spaces, and this would help lower risks/anxiety.</li> <li>• BC Ferries replied that changing public health mandates and directions during the pandemic have been very challenging for crew members. <i>Alignment with Public Health</i></li> </ul>

	<p>Officer direction is the most defensible and effective approach. Signage that is not aligned with public health mandates will likely be ignored (and is not enforceable by crew).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FAC suggests that, even without official PHO alignment, BC Ferries should consider a sign for one lounge asking for only individuals wearing masks to use.</li> <li>• <b>ACTION: BC Ferries can take this idea away for consideration (Capt Grewal). Response: Dedicating a lounge for mandatory, or even recommended, wearing of face coverings will be too impractical and challenging to implement or enforce. COMPLETED - this will not be trialed on Skeena Queen as suggested.</b></li> </ul>
<p>Camera locations at Fulford and Vesuvius (John)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can BC Ferries have webcam views on their website showing lineups leading to both terminals?</li> <li>• Practically this would not be possible, so currently our CCTV only shows our holding lots. The placement of the Salt Spring Exchange Camera at Vesuvius shows more of the road than our CCTV. The Fulford Salt Spring Exchange camera has a better view of our lot, but no road view and is located on the restaurant next to our lot.</li> <li>• As there is no staging capacity at Crofton Terminal to hold vehicles, a camera there would not accurately reflect how many are actually waiting. Cameras at the other two terminals would be outside BC Ferries' property and require agreement to place equipment on poles owned by other companies. Relaying signals from other poles may present challenges. BC Hydro is known to restrict items on their poles, so these ideas may lead to impractical solutions.</li> <li>• <b>ACTION: BC Ferries will initiate discussion with BC Hydro to understand the restrictions around installing cameras. (Hillis/Kovacs).</b></li> </ul>
<p>Possibility of increased daily sailings on Routes 4 and 6 (Harold)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To address increased demand, can BC Ferries look at adding sailings during peak season to provide capacity?</li> <li>• Adding capacity by increasing the number of daily sailings is generally less complicated and costly than other options, and we can look at this option when/if it makes sense.</li> <li>• We would look at this for Route 4, but not Route 6.</li> <li>• FAC is encouraged to hear there may be possibilities to look at adding sailings on Route 4, maybe as early as this summer. Discussion continued around limitations of finding time within 'current operating days' to fit extra sailings that customers would use.</li> <li>• In early days for Quinsam on Route 6: overloads have reduced, on-time performance is good, but this is still very early to assume a norm.</li> </ul>
<p>Presentation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• David Courtney shared experiences of recent Route 6 traffic flows, and expects heavy demand this summer to make it challenging for customers. He is working on leads for camera placements at Crofton, and this could help customers see traffic waiting.</li> </ul>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• He proposed if Dangerous Good sailings could be moved to evening times, this would have a huge impact for busy demand during the daytime...even if only for one of the sailings.</li><li>• He suggested that a two-ferry solution is the ultimate solution for both Route 4 and 6.</li></ul> |
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