

North and Central Coast Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting

Overview: meeting held at the Fairmont YVR November 4, 2016

In Attendance:

Committee: Hank Bood, Darren Edgar, Barry Cunningham, Ernest Hall, Travis Hall, Elizabeth Hume, Greg Martin, Mark Schlichting, Billy Yovanovich

BC Ferries: Mark Collins - VP Strategic Planning and Community Engagement, David Hendry- Strategic Planning Director, Captain Hardeep Grewal - Marine Superintendent, Jeff West – Superintendent, Terminal Operations, Darin Guenette-Public Affairs Manager

Meeting Highlights:

The objective of the meeting was to: discuss previous issues and explore options for addressing issues brought to the FAC from the community.

The next meeting will be planned for May 2016.

Issues Summary and Resolution Plan

A. Issue: Previous summary notes

Definition: Discussion around timeliness and lack of previous meeting summaries occurred, and some FAC members noted they could try to record their own version to share amongst other committee members until BC Ferries produced summaries.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: Darin to explore format/method that will produce more timely summaries..

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Aim for better summary note production	Darin	two months

B. Issue: Parking issues

Definition 1: At Bear Cove (Pt. Hardy) terminal:

- Campsites have been complaining that BC Ferries overnight parking rates are too low, and discouraging some from using campsites.
- Request for BCF to match campground rates of approximately \$38 (vs. \$22)
- BC Ferries allows overnight parking, with no hookup services, due to continuing customer requests, as they need to be in lot by 5:30 am for sailing check-in.
- Customers indicate they want the location for parking and are not price driven.
- BCF adjusted notes on website to not appear to make parking appealing.

- No current plans for BCF to adjust parking fee.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: Continue analysing parking fees, and any change that may be made would occur before spring 2017.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Analyse parking fees with pricing team	Jeff	Three months

Definition 2: At Skidegate (Haida Gwaii) terminal:

- Some customers park alongside the highway near the terminal, as they walk-on the ferry and there is no parking available.
- So, request to BCF is for reasonably priced, secure, overnight parking at Skidegate.
- Part of this lot was opened up for customers in July, and a fair overnight price is being considered prior to officially promoting/offering customer spaces.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: Determine policy/pricing for customers at Skidegate.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Share pricing decisions with Greg and Billy	Jeff	Two months

C. Issue: Mid-Coast service

Definition 1: Port Hardy-Bella Coola direct service:

- Mid-coast tourism working group received confirmation from the Province earlier in the summer that a Port Hardy-Bella Coola direct service would be established, to begin in 2018; nothing to update since then.
- To this, BC Ferries is awaiting further direction from the ministry on exactly what the desired level of service will be moving forward.
- In the meantime, since a new vessel would not be in service by 2018, BC Ferries is searching for an appropriate vessel for sale internationally.
- It is noted that summer tourism traffic is occurring prior to official peak schedules and remains after the schedule reduces in September.

Definition 2: Current Nimpkish service

- Proposal to BCF is to extend the peak season to 20 weeks total (begin at May long weekend, end at Thanksgiving).
- BC Ferries has analysed traffic demands recently, and has added in return sailings already in the ‘shoulder periods’ on both Route 10 and 11. These added sailings will remain in place for 2017 and future years...unless situations change.

- However, BC Ferries is providing the basic contracted levels of service on 10S, and cannot logistically add further service at this time.
- BCF asks FAC to make official, two-part request with a specific ask for where sailings would be added and with relevant economic rationale.
- FAC suggestion: add one week of additional sailings on each side of current peak period to test how well utilized they would be and the economic impact.

In related discussions, BC Ferries was asked how far in advance Northern route schedules are published (answer: minimum of 12 months, goal is longer), and it was suggested to aim for a minimum of 18-24 months. As well, a brief discussion happened around how BC Ferries may be involved in emergency response (answer: Emergency Management BC provides taskings/direction during any emergencies), and Mark Collins suggested that if municipal/regional governments sought BC Ferries assistance during an emergency, they should ask EMBC.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: None required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

D. Issue: Route 11 winter service

Definition: Discussion summary:

- Haida Gwaii has previously submitted a request to the Province to increase service levels on Route 11 during off-peak period, and if BCF were to publish any sailings they add on their own as far in advance as possible, this would be helpful.
- BC Ferries confirmed that they have added sailings in the spring/fall shoulder seasons of 2017, and the schedules are live online.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: Send FAC 2017 sailing schedules.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Send schedules/link to FAC.	Darin	Completed

E. Issue: Route 26

Definition 1: Haida Gwaii school board has requested three sailing time changes; 7:15 am, 7:40 am and 8:05 am all to be five minutes later.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: Determine if sailing times can be changed.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Consider changes as outlined.	Hardeep	Two months

Definition 2: Request to BC Ferries is to add sailings at 10:55 am and 11:20 am, Friday to Wednesday, at the same time dangerous goods runs happen on Thursdays, in order to help connect with Air Canada flights in peak period.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: Analyse request to add sailings and/or look at options to adjust current schedule to meet the goal.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Consider request to add sailings	Hardeep	Two months

F. Issue: Service to Bella Bella

Definition: Discussion occurred around how to explore ideas that may provide more convenient arrival/departure times at Bella Bella, while still ensuring the remainder of Route 10/10S sailings make sense for all communities. .

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: none.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

G. Issue: Sport team discounts

Definition: Discussion happened around options for creating new group/team discounts, and whether communities may support a voluntary fare increase (passenger and/or vehicle) as a means to raise funds that could support a team discount.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: None required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

H. Issue: Vehicle discount promotion

Definition: BC Ferries is coordinating a 50% fare discount on passenger vehicles, across all route, at select sailing times, between November 14 and December 18. Details can be found on bcferries.com.

BC Ferries input/follow-up: none required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

I. Issue: AEQ restatement

Definition: BC Ferries has recently standardized the calculation of the measurement of area on a deck used to approximate the average space of a vehicle – the AEQ (automobile equivalent). One AEQ is now 2.6 m X 6.1 m of deck space.

This restatement will affect utilization figures, and this fact will be stated in the next report provide to the Ferry Commissioner. New AEQ's:

- Northern Expedition: 115 Northern Adventure:87
- Nimpkish: 12 Kwuna: 16

BC Ferries input/follow-up: none required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

J. Issue: Minor 44 Class project

Definition: BC Ferries is standing up a ‘Minor 44 Class’ project. Highlights include:

- New class of vessels to be the new, smallest class in the fleet
- Two ships built first, with up to five more to follow
- First two vessels to be deployed on Route 18 and 25, allowing retirement of North Island Princess and the Howe Sound Queen, by approximately 2020. Noted earlier: Quinitsa to replace HSQ on Route 6.
- Vessels to be 44 AEQ and 300 people capacity
- Near Coastal 2 classification; deployable on large variety of routes
- Engagement sessions planned in applicable communities; seeking input on amenities

BC Ferries input/follow-up: none required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

K. Issue: FFDEI update

Definition: BC Ferries in continuing work in the Fare Flexibility and Digital Experience Initiative project, with significant updates in point-of-sale, website and ticketing technologies over the next two years. This will in turn allow for dynamic pricing to be offered on the Major routes, followed by the other reservable routes, starting in 2018. The overall goal of this work is to increase discretionary traffic travel by offering discount opportunities in lower utilized sailing times, to interact more efficiently with the customer and to bring in new traffic to the system.

BC Ferries input/follow-up: none required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		