

Ferry Advisory Committee (FAC) - Record of Meeting

Date:	June 6, 2019
Committee Name:	Denman-Hornby Islands
Routes:	21, 22

Attendees:

<p>For the FAC:</p> <p><i>Chair(s):</i> Frank Frketich</p> <p><i>Members</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noel Villard, Ron Edmonds • Karen Ross, George McRae • John Andrew, David Critchley • Jack Forsyth 	<p>For BCF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff West • Peter Simpson • Al de Koninck • Darin Guenette
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Points of Information/Agreement:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FAC Chair selection. The FAC agreed that Frank will continue to serve as Chair, and they are considering appointing a Vice Chair. 2. Assured loading for home support workers and seniors with medical appointments – follow up. Assured loading for home support workers travel between both islands and people attending key medical appointments had been previously discussed. Ron noted that work is still in progress around how to establish some sort of process in place to identify the customers who should receive this assured loading. It was noted this process is really only important for travel between Hornby and Denman. BCF is ready to support whatever the final process is, and will set appropriate procedures in place. Discussion followed regarding the health clinics transporting people to Shingle Spit, and previous problems for crews if people are travelling in a personal vehicle. 3. Terminal Development timelines. Jeff noted that both Terminal Development Plans are published online; post engagement and concept determination. At this point, Gravelly Bay is set for work to begin in the next fiscal year (post-April 2020), but this has not been finalized. Prior to any work beginning, a final design for the terminals needs to be approved and the projects need to be confirmed as part of the capital plan. The importance of trying to establish proper holding lanes, drive-through areas for efficient flow was highlighted. In the meantime, flaggers will be deployed again during the peak season at both Denman terminals for safety and organization. There are no plans to deploy flaggers on Hornby, as there is a shoulder along the road that allows for safer staging and does not see the roadway blocked. Karen suggested that driveway painting marks need to be made for some distance up the roadway. She also noted that a community bus operates in the summer, and signage asking drivers to pull

along the side of the road would greatly help prevent lane blocking. Related discussion followed around how to ensure customers approaching Buckley Bay understand when to use the 'U turn' process during busy times.

4. Route 21/22 peak season overloads. Ideas had been discussed during the most recent 'ops meeting', with hope for a temporary solution involving a Buckley-Hornby direct route. However, this request was denied, including from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. Thus, shuttling is the only current operational way to address heavy demand.

There are no other vessels to add to service or larger ones to replace the current ferries' available. The current operational day lengths are at their limits, so adding sailings earlier in the day to alleviate early demand buildup is not an option.

Karen asked if split shifts (ie. have two watches like Route 21) are an option for Route 22 when negotiating the collective agreement, and BCF said this is not possible. Also, adding a second crew to Route 22 operations is not a viable option due to high expense (extra labour costs) and difficulty finding accommodations for more employees. She added that the idea is to spread the existing demand across expanded service, not encourage new traffic.

Discussion followed around how analysis has been done to look at a variety of possibilities to try and address ways to add peak season service, and that there are significant challenges keeping ideas from getting implemented.

Karen read a submission from Rob McCreary, stressing that he feels BCF should seek new solutions for alleviating overloads/waits on Route 22 as soon as possible. This included accelerating the pace of a larger ferry, done in tandem while operating the Kahloke in parallel to the BSC on Route 21. Peter noted that the Quinita may be available to deploy on Route 22 within approximately 2-3 years, depending on plan to build four more Island Class vessels in that time (contract to be finalized).

5. Contingency plans for Baynes Sound Connector. Al noted that they are looking at a couple of ideas related to Route 21. One is to electrify the Baynes Sound Connector, and another is to expand the size of this vessel. Further detailed analysis needs to be done on both ideas, and BCF needs to understand what is most efficient and economical. BCF is not certain when either idea could be implemented. FAC is keen to understand any developments on this analysis at the next meeting. Discussion followed around how the BSC operates, including the process of decelerating and docking. BCF confirmed that the current plan is to deploy an Island Class vessel on Route 22 in about 2030, but plans could change by then.

As for replacement of the BSC if it breakdowns, BCF has a number of options they would look at, depending on the season and availability of other vessels. They stressed that the primary option is always to repair whatever problem comes up as soon as possible, rather than bringing in a replacement vessel.

Noel will talk to the Denman fire department about setting up an opportunity for them to come on the BSC to learn about the fire suppression systems. BCF confirmed that the plan is to maintain the conventional berth at Buckley to the end of its expected life, approximately 11-12 more years.

6. Peak season terminal staff at Denman West. Beginning June 15, staff will be at the terminal during times that are predicted to see heaviest traffic demand. This includes having people on site for long periods during known special events, etc. Jeff asked FAC for

feedback if they hear any ideas for fine tuning when the staff are at the terminal. These employees will be in place for the peak season.

7. Islands Trust signage. The Islands Trust is progressing on updates to what should be on their signs, and will update BCF when these are finalized. A spot has been identified at Buckley Bay to erect this sign when it is ready.
8. Safety announcements. Al noted that he has spoken with other BCF employees regarding ideas to shorten wording on announcements, but the final wording has not been determined.
9. Printed schedules. BCF will cease printing route schedules as of June 2020. Darin asked the FAC for ideas on how to help prepare the communities for this change and communicate this change when required.
Related point; Karen asked about BCF providing public wifi at Gravelly Bay, particularly useful when no paper schedules will be available. This may be considered, and Jeff will be involved.
10. BCF updates.
 - i. Customer Satisfaction Tracking. Darin explained that the Commissioner has asked BCF to review the effectiveness of the CST process in 2017, and to this, BCF is hiring a new research partner soon. A two-phase program will see the development of a new strategy for CST, and to expand both the scope (all routes will be included) and methodology (open online feedback, on board survey and more) of how customer satisfaction is received and measured.
 - ii. Fare flexibility. Implementation is delayed until after the website launches in the fall, but the keys notes are: on Major routes, there will still be some standby travel, there will not be surge pricing, some sailings will be discounted to promote travel. These offerings will apply to the Majors, and full implementation will happen in the next 1-2 years.
 - iii. Performance Term 5 summary. Commissioner has provided his preliminary price cap ruling of 2.3% for the period April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2024. Next steps are analysis and negotiations and contract changes by BCF and the Province. The final price cap needs to be set by September 30, 2019. BCF wants to ensure that the analysis into their capital plan is built into the projections sufficiently for fare caps, and this is part of the discussions that happen during this time
 - iii. New FAC docs. Darin reminded the FAC that the Terms of Reference and BCF 101 documents were tweaked for this new term, and he suggested that ideas for change can be sent to him anytime. Al added that BCF could be tasked to support community emergencies if required; this include fire evacuations, earthquakes, etc.

Action Items¹:

Item	Who	By When
1. Confirm when TDP projects will have timelines finalized.	Jeff	summer
2. Look at signage to help prevent road blocking (ie. bus having to go into oncoming lane) on Hornby, while looking at driveway hashing painting.	Jeff	summer

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.