

## Salt Spring Island Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting

### Overview: Harbour House Hotel, October 23, 2015

#### In Attendance:

Committee: Chris Gadsby, Howard Holzapfel, Wayne McIntyre, Matt Steffich, Howard Swierenga, Dave Toynbee, John Wakefield

BC Ferries: Mark Collins - VP Strategic Planning and Community Engagement, David Hendry- Strategic Planning Director, Captain Lewis MacKay- Marine Superintendent, , Monique Turgeon- Terminal Operations Superintendent, 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 is planned for May 2016.

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Issues Summary and Resolution Plan

#### A. Issue:      **SGI scheduling project update**

**Definition:** David Hendry noted that they received a great deal of feedback during summer open houses about the preliminary draft schedule options for Route 5/5a and 9 once the Salish Class vessels enter service in 2017. Therefore, BC Ferries has the following plan to continue this project:

- incorporate feedback into changes for the next draft schedules,
- include new draft schedules as part of a survey process due out in November,
- meet with the External Working Group early in 2016; and
- conduct a final survey, to seek preferred schedule option, in Spring 2016.

**BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution:** none required.

#### **Action Plan:**

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

#### B. Issue:      **Route 4 scheduling change during CUMB MLU**

**Definition:** Lewis explained that the upcoming Queen of Cumberland Mid-Life Upgrade (MLU) requires a notably longer period than typical refits, and the option of using the Bowen Queen as a relief vessel would have caused significant capacity concerns on Route 5.

Therefore, BC Ferries looked at how to best meet the capacity needs for Salt Spring and the other four Southern Gulf Islands with the availability of the Mayne Queen, Bowen Queen and Skeena Queen. From this, a plan was developed whereby the Skeena Queen and Bowen Queen ‘share service’ on Routes 4 and 5 (Monday to Friday only).

Because the overall capacity to/from Salt Spring would still be lower than normal, Route 6 will operate on a peak season schedule, and free parking will be provided for Salt Spring customers at Swartz Bay throughout the MLU period.

Discussion occurred around concerns received by FAC members that the lack of a 5 pm sailing from Swartz Bay on weekdays would provide a hardship for some commuters, especially foot passengers arriving via transit, and BC Ferries noted it may be possible to adjust the planned 4:15 pm (three buses arrive at Swartz Bay from 4:16 pm to 4:19 pm) and 6:05 pm sailings.

**BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution:** conduct further analysis on the impact of not having a 5 pm sailing from Swartz Bay during the MLU.

**Action Plan:**

Action	Responsible	Date
Talk to current foot passengers using the 5 pm sailing, to determine impact of MLU schedule.	Lewis	COMPLETED

**C. Issue: Throughfare analysis**

**Definition:** Monique noted that a working committee has been formed and is meeting soon to analyse all aspects of ways to improve/streamline the process by which customers transfer between various routes (1, 4, 5, 5a) at Swartz Bay. She noted that BC Ferries intends to find ways to improve the experience, and this includes finding short-term changes where possible. The goal for BC Ferries is to make this throughfare as viable and attractive as using Route 9 or inter-island sailings, and to find a way to recognize that a customer is ‘in the system’ at the time of check-in for the first sailing.

**BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution:** none required.

**Action Plan:**

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

**D. Issue: Fulford project update**

**Definition:** Since the most recent update on this project was provided in May, BC Ferries is conducting surveys of the property next to the Fulford Terminal before

proceeding with property purchase negotiations. Assuming successful negotiations, we will be proceeding with zoning applications on that property. Next, a terminal development plan will be conducted, which will include public/stakeholder consultation. Further details and timelines will be made available as the project progresses.

**BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution:** none required.

**Action Plan:**

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

**E. Issue: Operations Report**

**Definition:** Capt MacKay provided a summary of recent and near-future vessel and terminal developments related to Route 4, 6, 9/9a, including traffic and on-time performance statistics. The Queen of Nanaimo is currently in refit, and marine structures at Long Harbour are being surveyed for possible upgrade requirements.

**BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution:** Find out if Long Harbour upgrades may require sailing cancellations/schedule changes.

**Action Plan:**

Action	Responsible	Date
Provide FAC summary of Long Harbour upgrades that may affect sailings	Darin	by December

**F. Issue: Vehicle fare promotion**

**Definition:** Darin notified the FAC that BC Ferries would be offering a 50% discount on vehicle fares from November 16 to December 19, following the pattern used in the recent passenger fare promotion (Mon to Thurs and Saturday, select sailings eligible). The goal of the promotion is to shift traffic from busy sailings to lower demand sailings and to encourage ‘incremental (new) traffic’.

**BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution:** none required.

**Action Plan:**

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

**G. Issue: Customer Satisfaction Survey**

**Definition:** Mark pointed out that some concerns have been raised by Minor route FAC members that the information gathered through the Customer Satisfaction Tracking

(CST) survey process may be used to make decisions that affects routes not included in the survey.

He also noted that most of the Minor routes are not part of the CST, and that they have direct avenues for suggestions, feedback, and consultation with BC Ferries management. Having said this, he sought FAC thoughts on the survey and whether they feel being surveyed in some way in the future is important.

The FAC said that the current questions in the CST surveys would not likely apply much to Routes 4 and 6.

**BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution:** Include FAC input with other FACs and consider if any future survey process makes sense for Minor routes.

**Action Plan:**

Action	Responsible	Date
Analyze FAC input on future survey considerations	Mark	As applicable

**H. Issue: Salish Class update**

**Definition:** Mark notes that the Salish Class vessels currently under construction are ‘on schedule and budget’. They are being built with a dual-fuel capability, with the intent to operate on LNG full-time, and the fueling process will mirror what currently happens (fuel brought in by truck, fuelling happens during silent hours). He added that they will be wired for wi-fi, but that there are challenges to overcome around access to sufficient bandwidth and connectivity. Finally, Coast Salish themed artwork is planned for both external and internal surfaces, with an announcement pending due in November from the First Peoples’ Cultural Council on the selection of artists to developed this artwork.

In a related matter, BC Ferries noted that some berth/terminal work will be required at Long Harbour.

**BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution:** none required.

**Action Plan:**

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

**I. Issue: Cable ferry update**

**Definition:** Mark provided a summary of the status of the cable ferry due to enter service on the Denman Island-Buckley Bay route soon. At present, Vancouver Shipyards (SeaSpan) still owns the vessel and is conducting trials, and therefore BC Ferries is very limited in what they can communicate about the ferry. In general, there is much

misinformation in the community; however the vessel is meeting all technical requirements so far, including:

- speed targets using one engine
- Load capacity (weight)
- Cables are not rusting/deteriorating/too heavy and performing as planned.
- Fuel consumption is as projected or lower.
- Vessel is meeting current schedule requirements.
- Overall project is on budget.

Once BC Ferries takes official ownership, more detailed information and plans (crewing levels, trial, in-service dates, etc.) will be communicated.

**BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution:** none required.

**Action Plan:**

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		