

Salt Spring Island Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting

Overview: Harbour House Hotel, November 2, 2016

In Attendance:

Committee: Chris Gadsby, Peter Grant, Peter Grove, Howard Holzapfel, 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, , Camrin Hillis - Terminal Operations Manager, Darin Guenette-Public Affairs Manager

Others: Sarah Smith (Fortis) and Tina Rogers (MOTI)

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 sometime late spring of 2017.

Issues Summary and Resolution Plan

A. Issue: Salish Class update

Definition: Highlights of next steps for the Salish Class vessels:

- Orca in sea trials and doing well.
- Eagle and Raven construction progressing.
- Queen of Nanaimo and at least one of either Eagle or Raven are expected to be in service by May 5, which is when the 'new Route 9 schedule begins'.
- However, if any change to this plan is expected, BC Ferries will strive to provide at least three months' notice to communities.

Further discussion occurred around natural gas fueling (timings, process, safety, etc). Bunkering of the fuel will happen on board and fuelling to occur via truck, which is the same as what happens with diesel fuel. Passengers at the terminal during fueling would be outside of an 'exclusion zone' developed for safety.

Fortis confirmed ensures fuel trucking companies have all education and logistics required to safely fuel the ships, and they are also providing education on natural gas to all relevant firefighting organizations. These firefighters then determine their own training and equipment requirements. If a spill were ever to occur during fuelling, the fuel would gasify and vent to the atmosphere. Computers are involved in ensuring fuelling process is safe and in control, and both the ship and trucks have multiple safety and containment features.

BC Ferries input/follow-up: none required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

B. Issue: Fulford terminal project

Definition: A summary of BC Ferries plans to upgrade Fulford terminal:

- Once a property near the terminal is successfully purchased, it is expected to take 3-3.5 years for completion of full terminal upgrade.
- Will result in capacity to park approximately 145 vehicles in the terminal lot.
- Will include pick-up/drop-off lane, employee parking and bus stop zone.
- If property acquisition is unsuccessful, BC Ferries has alternate upgrade design.
- In the meantime, plans are in place for increased traffic control during peak season near terminal.

BC Ferries input/follow-up: as the situation develops, keep the FAC informed.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

C. Issue: Throughfare pilot

Definition: A summary of points related to the throughfare pilot initiated early this year to smooth connections from Route 1 to Route 4 at Swartz Bay:

- FAC has heard extensive positive feedback to new processes.
- Community would like to see similar process in place for Route 4 to Route 1 transfers at Swartz Bay, if possible.
- However, BC Ferries has two significant constraints (no staff to segregate traffic at Fulford and no fare paying booth to hand out mirror cards) that currently prevent these processes to work in ‘the other direction’.
- No further analysis is occurring to develop process in the other direction.

FAC suggestion: consider moving the current ‘throughfare machine’ from the vessel to the Fulford terminal, and establish a process to communicate throughfare customers between vessel and terminals.

BC Ferries input/follow-up: Throughfare committee to consider FAC suggestion.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Raise FAC suggestion at throughfare committee meeting	Camrin	Next meeting

D. Issue: Certainty of making 9 pm Route 4 sailing

Definition: With new Route 9 schedules to be implemented in 2017, many Salt Spring customers will be using the Route 1 to Route 4 connections...and making the last sailing to the island (9 pm from Swartz Bay) is seen as very important.

- Request to BC Ferries is to develop a process to hold Skeena Queen a specific time in order to wait for Route 1 transfer.
- BC Ferries already has a process to hold SQ a reasonable amount of time (15-20 mins) when it is known Route 1 vessel is late.

FAC request: ensure a definite connection to the 9 pm Route 4 sailing, within reasonable wait times.

BC Ferries input/follow-up: consider FAC request for providing definitive connection success.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Request operations staff input/expertise wrt possible definite connection to 9 pm sailing	Mark	Three months

E. Issue: Skeena Queen MLU

Definition: The current plan for the mid-life upgrade of the Skeena Queen:

- MLU in late (Oct/Nov) 2019, to last approximately five months.
- All four lounges will be refurbished during MLU.
- SQ to now have a five-week refit in Jan/Feb 2017 prior to MLU; no plan for additional sailings on Route 4.
- BC Ferries exploring option to use Queen of Cumberland for certain peak morning sailings on Route 4, and Bowen Queen to swap routes.

BC Ferries input/follow-up: none required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

F. Issue: Operations report

Definition: Summary:

- Traffic: vehicle traffic up in last 12 months 3.7%/4.6%/8% on Routes 4,6 and 9 respectively.
- On-time performance: strong most of year, with some drop in summer.
- Route 6 summer schedule is being analysed for efficiency changes.
- Route 4 summer Saturday schedule being analysed for improvements.
- Skeena Queen out of service December 12 for one day, RAD replacement; Bowen Queen to relieve.
- Route 6 crews familiarizing on the Quinitsa, as this is a likely future vessel deployment.
- FAC suggests ‘ticketing buying’ sign at Crofton is still too small and high for customers to see it.

BC Ferries input/follow-up: Review ‘ticket buying sign’ at Crofton for improvement.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Discuss ticketing sign at Crofton with staff for improvement ideas	Camrin	Three months

G. 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 bcferrries.com.

BC Ferries input/follow-up: none required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

H. 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:

- Queen of Nanaimo: 164 Skeena Queen: 92 Howe Sound Queen: 52

BC Ferries input/follow-up: none required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

I. 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		

J. 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		

K. Issue: Miscellaneous points

Definition: FAC requests: Send files in PDF and disconnect overlength ‘per foot rate’ with commercial rates.

- Tina described parking changes on Morningside Road with FAC