

## Ferry Advisory Committee (FAC) - Record of Meeting

Date:	October 24, 2019
Committee Name:	Northern Sunshine Coast
Route:	7, 17, 18

### Attendees:

<p>For the FAC:</p> <p><i>Chair</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kim Barton-Bridges</li> </ul> <p><i>Members</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warren Kiland, Jacquie Donaldson</li> <li>• Patrick Brabazon, Jason Rekve</li> <li>• Sue Clark, Jim Palm</li> </ul>	<p>For BCF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brian Anderson</li> <li>• Peter Simpson</li> <li>• Jeff West</li> <li>• Al de Koninck</li> <li>• Darin Guenette</li> </ul>
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### Points of Agreement/Information:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Texada rep change. Al Davis has left the FAC and thanks was given. Warren Kiland has returned to the FAC, and he was welcomed.</li> <li>2. Island Class update. BCF is preparing the acceptance of the two vessels, which are still in the shipyard in Romania. They will be shipped (heavy lift vessel) to Canada in upcoming weeks and then BCF will work with Transport Canada and crews to finalize certifications and training. BCF will update the FAC/community when specific in-service dates are planned, but this should happen next spring.</li> <li>3. PT5 fare cap decision and negative community feedback. FAC has seen some negative feedback regarding the Commissioner's fare cap decision of 2.3% increases over the upcoming four year term (beginning April 1, 2020). This allows BCF to raise fares, on average, by 2.3% over that time to ensure all operational and capital requirements are met. BCF will need to monitor closely if the revenue, traffic and expense forecasts are realized. There may be a need to consider some plans with respect to service and infrastructure updates if some financial results are not meeting expectations.</li> </ol> <p>Jason noted that he believes some frustration/confusion may be due to the fact that fares have leveled, and asked if BCF intends in fulfilling this price increase cap each year. BCF noted that, provided all projections for traffic/revenue/costs come through, then they would indeed increase fares each year to this level. There was discussion around the Province's role in funding the ferry system and whether they may wish to increase funding that would then alleviate the need to increase fares. It was noted that the Ministry is currently hosting engagement sessions as part of a transportation visioning exercise, which may be a good venue to express community concerns around fares increasing. Discussion followed around ways to communicate how fare setting process works.</p>
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4. Route 3 (Langdale-H.Bay) schedule changes and corresponding Route 7 (Saltery Bay-Earls Cove) changes. Changes were made to the Route 3 schedule in the past peak season, as a way in improving on-time performance. These changes were successful and customers are arriving/departing as expected on a much higher rate. Now that this schedule has proven to work, BCF is happy to look at whether Route 7 schedule changes should be made. Al asked for some consideration in waiting until the Island Class vessel begins service on Route 18 (Texada), so that we can then look at how Route 7 and 18 also connect prior to making changes. Peter added that Route 3-7 connectivity cannot be scheduled in both directions.
5. Texada-Comox direct service update. Final details are being covered to start this direct service soon. The current plan is to make public announcements about the trial with at least two weeks prior to first day of operation. This time is required to ensure customers are aware of the sailing time changes on Wednesday and Saturday, which are earlier than other days. BCF asked the committee for help in ensuring that community groups are made aware. The process will involve Texadans having to make bookings in advance, with prepayment. Extra foot passengers can be added at the time of sailing, as they can pay on board. Ten vehicles spots will be available on the applicable sailings (first sailing out of Westview and last sailing out of Little River). Discussion continued around ensuring there are good ways of measuring success of the pilot, and understand the impact of Powell River customers. It was noted that there will be a separate vehicle staging area near Blubber Bay for the vehicles waiting to board the morning sailing to Comox, as they need to be separated from traffic staging to travel to Powell River. Chuck Childress presented some traffic stats relating to the pilot plan, whereby he suggests that there should be ample empty deck space (according to previous stats) to allow up to 20 vehicles from Texada, not 10. Stats show that this should still not come close to overloading these sailings, thus not restricting Powell River customer access. He suggests that in the long-term, all customers (from P.River and Texada) be allowed access to these sailings equally...via prepaying and booking. BCF noted that the intent of establishing this pilot is to set it up for success, and they need to start 'cautiously', thus setting the allocation to 10 vehicles as a start. They will monitor the bookings and look for opportunities to make changes like this, if all operates well.
6. Peninsula bus service. A local committee is seeking options for bus service along the Sunshine Coast, to allow continuous travel to/from Metro Vancouver. Currently there is no bus service between Powell River and Metro Vancouver, thus requiring people to piece together transport, and this is inconvenient. Thus, the concept is to have a bus start in Lund, transit to Saltery Bay, travel on the ferry to Earls Cove, and unload passengers for further bus connection; a similar 'turnaround' would be sought for Route 3 at Horseshoe Bay. The request to BCF is to support a bus getting assured loading on Route 7 and then returning to the same Route 7 ferry after arrival at Earls Cove. In principle, BCF is willing to look at what would be required to make this 'operationally possible', if the FAC is clear on details (bus size, sailing plan, etc) and supports this concept. Clint Williams noted that part of the request may be to seek BCF support in covering the fare of this bus on Route 7. This was supported by another speaker, who noted that the current private bus operator along the Coast has faced challenges with the fares they are paying when compared to the revenue they are bringing in from users. Next step is for this local committee to present a detailed proposal to BCF.
7. Crew recruiting update. Al noted that, after recent efforts to find accommodations for local crew on the Island Class, success has been achieved.

8. Website notes on reservations. Tourism Powell River has expressed concern that ‘reservations full’ may be confusing customers to indicate the vessel is full. They are asking for BCF to more clearly communicate that ‘reservations full’, does not indicate that the sailings are full. That is, there may still be notable space for standby customers. There was discussion around the confusion that may arise the wording used (standby, ‘full’, etc).
9. Terminal development updates. For Langdale, there are still some approvals for the costs associated with the overhead walkway and other aspects. If this happens, work will begin in 2020, with a completion of the walkway for fall of 2021.  
For Horsehoe Bay, engagement (online surveys) are just ending. In person sessions have gone well and plan approvals should happen later this year.
10. Ops meeting in 2020. Al offered dates to meet in 2020 with the FAC, who will return ideas back to him. They will confirm this once member come back with ideas.
11. Island Sky renaming. A ceremony is happening today at Saltery Bay at 1:45 pm. The vessel will now be known as Malspina Sky, and this was done to ensure this ship was not seen to be included in the new Island Class.
12. Tribal Journeys. The T’lammin Nation is hosting the 2021 Tribal Journey event. This involves canoes from various First Nations to travel to Powell River July 27-Aug 5, 2021. They note that there should be considerable increase in traffic during that time and have offered to meet with BCF to discuss options to help meet these spike in traffic.
13. BCF updates. Darin explained that the new website will be launched in early 2020, and this provides new functionality and appearance features. The fare flexibility features for the major routes are due to be launched soon after the new website. Note that the information displaying the level a sailing is full and parking lot status will now indicate how much space is available instead. Warren noted that any improvements for a lineup cam, or other info, to help Texada customers understand the status at Blubber Bay would be very beneficial.
14. Miscellaneous. The FAC agreed to continue with Kim as Chair, and to aim to have someone else prepare to be Chair in the next term during the last year of this term.  
Discussion happened around how/when large commercial vehicles are restricted travel on Route 18 vessels. BCF wants to work with these large contractors to try and plan moves of larger number of vehicles, but essentially a limit of two for concrete vehicles is a goal. This will still allow for 15 other vehicles on those sailings. Note that there will be no restrictions to large commercial vehicles on the Island Class once it assumes service. Related point; BCF is analysing whether non-DG commercial vehicles can be transported on DG sailings. More on this later as analysis progresses.

**Action Items<sup>1</sup>:**

Item	Who	By When
1. Check if website wording around ‘full reservations’ will change with the new website.	Darin	Completed - yes
2. Look into whether any Texada ‘current conditions’ improvements are planned.	Jeff	End-December

<sup>1</sup> 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.