

Southern Gulf Islands Ferry Advisory Committee

Fall/Winter 2021 Meeting Agenda

Thursday, January 20, 2022
9 am – 11:30 am

Meeting Purpose

- 1. Share information by providing the Ferry Advisory Committee with:**
 - Updates on corporate and route-specific activities, plans and projects
 - Answers and updates on route-specific questions and concerns

- 2. Hear feedback and initiate action by:**
 - Hearing from the Ferry Advisory Committee about potential solutions to areas of concern
 - Generating trackable action items and next steps to address areas of concern raised by the Ferry Advisory Committee

- 3. Increase transparency and accountability by providing a public venue where:**
 - Community members can observe and hear the information and feedback exchanged between BC Ferries and the Ferry Advisory Committee
 - Actions and solutions to concerns can be identified, recorded, tracked and reported

Topic	Time
Intros and welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of agenda 	10 mins
Information section <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. BC Ferries Operational updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine superintendent • Terminals 2. FAC review and enhancements 3. New Customer Experience team 4. Website update 5. Route 5/5a and Salish deployment (Roy) 6. Terminal Development project update (Mary, Diana) 	10 mins
Discussion section <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wi-fi at terminals (David, Dale) 2. Service Notices: timing, email process, etc (David) 3. Saturna concerns (Rob): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. thru fare b. Swartz Bay dedicated lane c. Priority loading; Swartz Bay and Tsawwassen 4. Foot passenger trailer at Tsawwassen Berth 2 and protocol (Diana, Charlene) 5. Printed schedule distribution; out of stock, not on display, etc (David) 6. Vessel replacement and scheduling exercise update (Diana, Carrie) 7. Inter-island via Swartz Bay; reduced tariff request 	2 hours
New Business <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Village Bay Berth 2 wingwall project and modified service 2. Open discussion 	10 mins

Attached: Meeting topic log

Southern Gulf Islands Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting Topic Log January 2022

NOTE: notes summarizing the general discussion of meeting participants is included in the appropriate section of each agenda item in the table below.

- Text in black was information sent to all meeting invitees prior to the meeting as part of the agenda.
- Text in blue are notes taken during the meeting as each item was discussed.
- Text in red captures a follow up action and parties responsible.

Meeting attendees:

BC Ferries: Brian Anderson, Capt. Hardeep Grewal, Darin Guenette, Cam Hillis, Natalie McCall, Carrie McIntosh, Tamara Olson, Peter Simpson

Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure: Kirk Handrahan

FAC: Rob Alloway, Charlene Dishaw, Mary Greenwood, Dale Henning, Diana King, Robert Matson, David Maude, Roy Moore, Wendy Sage-Hayward, Tobi Wadsworth

Information Section	
Marine Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salish Raven refit: February 18-March 31, 2022; Salish Eagle as relief vessel. • NOTES: Route 9 modified service is currently in place, and the teams are doing all they can to return to full service as soon as possible.
Terminals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Bay Berth 2 wingwall life extension and upgrade work for to be done February 7 to March 20, 2022. Berth closed this entire period. • NOTES: start date of this work is delayed one to two weeks, and BC Ferries will update the FAC when new dates are set.
Update on FAC review and enhancements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioner has started her formal review of the FAC process, Chairs and members of the BC Ferries team are being interviewed and involved in this process now

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the same time, BC Ferries is working to identify areas of improvement to the FAC process through the FAC member survey distributed last August, and ongoing meetings with FAC Chairs. • BCF continues to work with FAC Chairs on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased communication and more opportunities to meet with the FAC membership ○ Enhancements to recruitment and onboarding processes ○ Review and refresh of Terms of Reference ○ Providing more, and more meaningful information to FACs, e.g. route data and performance stats, upcoming projects and plans ○ Earlier involvement of FAC in planning and projects • Enhanced reporting on actions taken as a result of FAC feedback • NOTES: BC Ferries has developed new route reports, with information on operations and other issues related to the FAC routes. These will be sent to the FAC shortly, and all feedback is welcomed.
<p>Introducing the new Customer Experience team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC Ferries has introduced a new Customer Experience team as part of our Marketing Department • This team is focused on identifying and solving common customer pain points across our system • They monitor customer feedback mechanisms, e.g. customer care feedback tracking, feedback from Ferry Advisory Committee members etc. to identify common pain points and then work to bring the right departments together to find and implement solutions • Natalie McCall is the Customer Experience Manager for Routes 5 & 9.
<p>BC Ferries website and app development: current conditions page, app launch date</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recent changes have been made to the Current Conditions site, where Departure/Arrival, webcams and ferry-tracking features all brought under the CC menu. Next steps are work progressing on making as more of the information found on these separate pages all together on the CC page. • Frequent website upgrades are made as revisions. Next revisions (#79) is expected to be live approximately end-January 2022. Highlights of this revisions TBC soon. • App launch is set for 2022, with focus group research and design changes still underway. • NOTES: Roy has attended the recent demo session and says it looks promising.
<p>Route 5/5a service with Salish and Cumberland near-term</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both Salish Eagle and Raven are in refit, at separate times, in the January to April period. Therefore, there is no Salish available to use for regular Route 5 service.
<p>Terminal Development project update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sturdies Bay: draft TDP is complete and approval expected Spring 2022. Plan will be shared with FAC and posted on BCF.com after that.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Village and Otter Bay: both TDPs in concept development phase. Community/FAC/stakeholder engagement is near-future, with focus on virtual formats. Draft TDP then developed (Spring), with approvals expected shortly afterwards.
<p>Discussion Section</p>	
<p>Update on wi-fi at terminals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wi-fi is being introduced at 13 terminals, planned completion by April 2022. Sturdies Bay, Otter Bay and Lyall Harbour terminals included in these 13 terminals, with work planned in January/February timeframe. Team is aware of requests for Village Bay installation as a higher priority.
<p>Service Notices: timing, email process and other details</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timeliness of Service Notice emails has been a problem in keeping people informed in a timely manner. NOTES: FAC members are still seeing lag time for SNs arriving via email, and lack of updates when the service is back-on-time or resumed (if temporarily paused). ACTION: take feedback to the team involved in improvements to SN process. COMPLETED – Darin, January 24.
<p>Saturna concerns: Swartz Bay dedicated lane, highway signage, and ensuring Saturna customers have priority for 3:10 sailing from Swartz Bay</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terminal Operations manages lane priorities the best they can with the available lanes on the approach to the terminal. With only four lanes and the timing of 1500 sailings to TSA and SSI there can be challenges trying to segregate lanes for each destination and Rt.1 reserved traffic. When sailings are nearing full, they are cognizant of ensuring everyone is ticketed in order of arrival, which can also create longer lines than we would like at the booths. Even though lines can be long, they are not aware of occurrences where customers do not make their intended sailing if space was available. The priority for Saturna customers <u>is</u> a loading policy at SWB Terminal. Terminal Operations will ensure there are regular reminders prior to next year’s peak season. With any operation and rigid policies there are risks of errors, but the terminal team strives to avoid errors. This particular sailing and load order is one of the most complex sailings from SWB, which unfortunately increases risks of error higher than any other sailing. NOTES: Discussion on the occasions when the dedicated SGI lanes outside the booths are lost during particularly busy periods, and this can make the difference in customers missing a sailing because they cannot get through to the booths. Cam and the terminal team acknowledge the importance of keeping a dedicated lane for SGI customers to access the booths in a timely manner. He noted that this lane is shared

	<p>between SGI traffic and reserved customers, and they will look at this impact of reserved traffic potentially holding up SGI vehicles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dave Maude suggested that the overhead signage information can be used to help mitigate situations where traffic control cannot be deployed quickly enough. • Rob Alloway noted that Saturna traffic is not being prioritized consistently on the 3:10 sailing. Cam added that this loading process is very complex, and he realizes that errors occur once in a while. He'll continue to work with his staff to maintain consistency. • Rob asks BC Ferries to add text in the online schedules pages for this 3:10 sailing about this priority loading process. • ACTION: Cam to work with his team to consider separating lane usage between reserved vehicles and SGI vehicles outside the booths. • ACTION: Darin and Natalie to look at adding text to online schedules referring to priority loading for the 3:10 sailing and report back to the FAC by early February. COMPLETED (Feb 10) – annotation and text added on each schedule table on BC Ferries website. • ACTION: Cam and Hardeep to consider a process to ensure that Saturna traffic is consistently prioritized on 3:10 sailing.
<p>Foot passenger trailer at Tsawwassen Berth 2 and protocol</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper lounge sweep by terminal personnel happens every Route 9 sailing. The lounge is usable and accessible for every customer. • Note that the ship determines the loading order, and sometimes this means vehicles prior to foot passengers. • NOTES: Mary added that the lounge is not a good option for some people (mobility issues, luggage, takes too much time to get to the ship, etc). As well, in the occasions when foot passengers are loaded after vehicles, they may be outside in poor weather and very uncomfortable. • One suggestion is to help promote that the lounge should be used, and that announcements are made as well as checked prior to every sailing. There is also an opportunity to provide information that clarifies when foot passengers can expect to be loaded. • Suggestions from FAC: if the loading order of foot passengers varies, staff should be present in the lounge to inform passengers when they should proceed to the ship, and escort them if possible. Another idea was whether the ship could use a different berth. • ACTION: Cam to discuss refinement of process and communications around foot passenger loading with the Tsawwassen manager. He'll get back to the FAC within a couple of weeks.
<p>Printed schedule distribution</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAC has noted lack of printed schedules on ships or at terminals for years, despite customer demand.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC Ferries is resetting the process whereby printed schedules get to terminals and ships, as it was discovered there were gaps in communication. • Note that a supplement print run is in place for more copies of the current schedule version to be in circulation soon. • NOTES: A new process has been established for providing access to printed versions of SGI schedules as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the start of each date-band, a digital version of schedules is sent to vessels and terminals for them to print-on-demand and distribute. - As well, every vessel and terminal in the SGI network is sent an allocation of printed copies of the schedules. • Cam noted he'll keep a stock of printed brochures available to help get them into the community rack on Mayne Island.
<p>Vessel replacement and scheduling exercise update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC Ferries is working on options that balance the FAC's feedback to keep the current schedule with the business need to make the best use of the increased capacity of a Salish vessel. • With the Salish Heron arriving into service this spring, we need to make some decisions regarding its schedule shortly. You can expect to hear from us by the end of the month regarding our next steps and any plans for additional engagement. • NOTES: BCF confirmed an additional Salish vessel will be deployed on Route 5 and will schedule a meeting with the SGI FAC within the next couple of weeks to provide an update on schedule communication activities. • Brian acknowledged that the FAC has clearly communicated that changes in port sequencing or routing can have large impacts and are to be avoided. However, some small changes to service will be required when the Salish is added into the SGI network. The team is striving to arrive at a schedule that balances minimizing disruption to travel patterns with small changes that allow for the best use of the additional capacity available with a larger Salish vessel. BC Ferries will work closely with the FAC to monitor the effects of changes once the ship is in service. • ACTION: BC Ferries will set a meeting with FAC to provide an update on the SGI scheduling project. COMPLETED. Meeting set for March 8.
<p>Through fare issues; between islands via Swartz Bay or Tsawwassen</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAC has requested that thru fares be noted in the schedule with appropriate pricing linked to online reservations. • Current thru fare information shown at the top of the 'Route 9 schedule tables' for Saturna and Pender Islands. As an example, see: https://www.bcferries.com/routes-fares/schedules/seasonal/TSA-PST .

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Web services team are reworking this thru fare information to make it clearer and to remove the Route 9 sailing options to avoid confusion; new layout should be available in upcoming weeks. • There is no ability to display fares along with other information on these schedule pages. • Also, FAC has made previous request to reduce fare when one is required to thru fare between islands using a Swartz Bay transfers. • NOTES: The more education or information around thru fare options, the better. Wendy will look at most recent draft re-work of thru fare schedule tables and can send any feedback to BC Ferries. • A reminder that the FAC had requested that the fare for transferring at Swartz Bay to travel inter-island be made equivalent to regular inter-island fares. Cam noted there are some technical challenges that limit what can be done at Swartz Bay, and that the Tariff team is seeking options to address these challenges.
<p>Village Bay Berth 2 wingwall project and modified service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A modified schedule has been developed for the Feb 7-March 20 period, where some Village Bay transfers (around 5 pm) are cancelled. • Operations teams assessed possibility of bringing Route 9 ship in/out an extra time to re-establish Saturna to Tsawwassen transfers during this time, but this was deemed not feasible Monday-Thursdays. However, if there is Saturna to TSA Friday afternoon traffic, this transfer can be provided. • For Saturna customers travelling to TSA Mon-Thurs afternoon via a Swartz Bay thru fare, Ops teams will coordinate priority connection with the 7 pm Route 1 sailing. • NOTES: BC Ferries will create communications that outline the process required Monday to Thursday for Saturna customers who are travelling to TSA via Swartz Bay. • Rob suggested that information should be added to communications about the fact that BC Ferries looked at trying to accommodate extra transfers at Village Bay but that they could not be accommodated. • BC Ferries will outline very specific wording around measures to get Saturna customers onto the 7 pm Route 1 sailing. Rob suggests including in these communications that the Route 1 sailing will not be held, however. • Dave suggested BC Ferries consider covering fares for those who do not make the 7pm sailing due to BC Ferries delays • ACTION: BC Ferries will develop information around why transfers cannot be maintained during the Village Bay berth closure. They will share draft communications with the FAC for their consideration and feedback. COMPLETED; webpage on VB closure being is live...including information on service impacts for each island and separate direction for Saturna customers needing to use the Swartz Bay thru fare Monday to Thursday evenings. This is supported by: Service Notice update/reissue, social media postings.

<p>Open discussion Rte 9 modified service status (Fri call)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Island updates:- Saturna. Rob suggested we consider how to maximize screen view for seeing other meeting participants during meetings. Wendy expressed that when they point out challenging aspects of schedule options, she hopes this is not seen as overly negative.- Pender. Roy reminded the group that the Pender outside digital sign is not ideally placed, and that another screen in the waiting room would be much more valuable. He asked if there is any progress on looking into this issue. He added that they are still interested in seeing traffic data during the recent period when a Salish operated on Route 5. Darin noted that this data will be incorporated in the next, sailing-by-sailing report he sends the FAC. Dale noted that most people work around the current schedule and port arrangements, and this means any changes when the Salish is brought into service on Route 5 can be worrisome. He returns to discussion early in the scheduling exercise when the assumption was that the Salish would just assume the current Queen of Cumberland sailings without change, and suggests this approach be adopted. Brian clarified that the prime goal is to focus on getting the maximum benefit from deploying the larger Salish vessel on this route with least adjustment to existing port sequencing. Dale asked if it was possible to get the bell from the Mayne Queen for the Pender museum once that ship is retired. Hardeep replied that he believes the ship bells are not something that can be donated, but he'll review this again. ACTION: BC Ferries to look at adding a digital display in the Otter Bay waiting room. IN PROGRESS.- Mayne. David thanked BC Ferries for advance notice on Route 9 crewing shortage and keeping the FAC informed.- Route 9 modified service. FAC members have heard little/limited feedback so far. Wendy noted that the website message for Tsawwassen to the islands indicates this routing is not an option, and one can join the waitlist, but this is not clear that these sailings are actually cancelled. It was suggested messaging could indicate that routing is not available and customers should travel using the Swartz Bay thru fare routing. As well, the phone menu process only indicates that Route 9 bookings are not an option. ACTION: Natalie to look at amending website wording and phone messaging around Route 9 afternoon sailing cancellations and customer options for travel; as soon as reasonable. COMPLETED; 'waitlist' message removed and thru fare messaging added. Phone tree process has also been concluded.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- BC Ferries and COVID impacts. Fewer than 1% of employees are unvaccinated. Transport Canada requirements call for all employees to be fully vaccinated by January 24, and this may have an effect on our staffing options as will the number of employees getting ill from the Omicron variant. Crewing teams will continue to closely monitor changing employee status and availabilities, and will keep working on exploring all possible crew replacement options prior to having to adjust regular service.
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