

Ferry Advisory Committee (FAC) - Record of Meeting

Date:	May 27, 2019
Committee Name:	North & Central Coast
Routes:	10, 11, 26, 28

Attendees:

<p>For the FAC: <i>Chair(s):</i> Mark Schlichting (cc) <i>Members</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reg Moody (Heiltsuk TC), Evan Putterill • Pete Kovanda (phone), Elizabeth Aman-Hume • Fred Robertson, Lisa Pineault • Toni Ziganash, Ooka Pineault 	<p>For BCF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeff West • Peter Simpson • Lance Lomax • Darin Guenette • Mark Wilson
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Points of Information/Agreement:

1. Chair/co-Chair selection. FAC members had determined that Evan and Reg will serve as co-Chairs on the FAC after this meeting.
2. N.Sea Wolf operations/Route 28. So, far, the Sea Wolf has been operating well since May 18 in place of the Nimpkish. The crew is getting used to the ship, but keen to start the direct service on June 3. It was noted that the ship emits large black exhaust plumes, but Lance says the engineers are indeed working on options to reduce this. The Nimpkish has been recertified for one more year, as a contingency if required. There was discussion around whether there was a difference in the food service between the peak and non-peak season; Lance will confirm this (REPLY: very little difference).
 BCF confirmed that there are 92 direct sailings between June 3 and Oct 10 this season, with 83% of these sailings having at least half the capacity booked already. Although two sailings are at full vehicle capacity, there is still room to making a booking for those interested. Discussion around how waitlists are managed/planned followed.
 It was noted that BCF has a draft schedule for peak season of 2020 (June 19-Sept 30) that they have shared with tour operators. It is expected that those sailings will be opened up for bookings in the fall (approx. Oct period). Discussion followed around how the FAC or communities could submit requests to have the peak season extended beyond end-Sept. This included an explanation around the SSR form that FACs can use to formally make a request to BCF.
3. Route 10 loading/lost booking. FAC noted that there have been increasing stories of customers arriving and terminal staff were not able to 'find' their bookings. Jeff noted that there are not technical problems at terminals, but there may be cases of people with

similar/same names who are being mixed up. He stressed that customers should keep their booking reference numbers as a certain way to redeem a booking.

4. Skidegate terminal redevelopment. The TDP options indicate there would be a conflict between Route 11 vehicles/passengers, and Lisa hopes to see this changed in the final design. Jeff acknowledged that this is not an ideal flow to eliminate conflict between people and vehicles, and he says this piece is a target for change in the final design of the terminal redevelopment. Before final design is set, another round of engagement will be held in the communities.
5. Route 26 issues. BCF confirmed that they will likely ask to form a small working group (BCF and community reps) to analyse what the new schedule should look like once the full 16-hour service is set up; the default would be the schedule that was in place in 2013. Thursday night extra sailings. BCF confirmed they will still be providing extra sailings every second Thursday to meet the arrival of the Route 11 sailing.
As far as when the full service may be implemented, BCF confirmed they are currently working with the Employee Relations team to find the right number of employees in all positions. So far, there have not been any people found to restart this service any sooner than perhaps the end of 2018, but this has been a challenge. If the crewing can be found prior to the end of 2018, the service will be added as soon as practicable.
On-time performance issues. FAC asked if the nine-minute grace period is still how BCF measures OTP, and BCF confirmed it is. Community members note that a 10 minute delay can be quite significant for a shorter sailing like Route 26. BCF noted that exact sailing departures are measured and analysed.
Digital signs. BCF has installed signs to provide key operational information for customers at terminals, particularly at unstaffed terminals. They show sailing status and vessel positions maps. There have been some growing pains on getting the information accurate all the times, but BCF is learning and these signs should be valuable and accurate for customers.
6. Route 11. Evan noted that the Thursday ability to connect will help, but he wonders if there is a way to designate that Route 11 and 26 should be connecting, ensuring people will consistently have a connection home. It was agreed that once Route 26 is fully expanded, customers should not be 'stranded' at Skidegate (weather permitting). There had been a freight issue raised, but nothing specific has come back to the FAC. It was noted that there was not really consultation with the FAC around the Route 11 schedule when service was restored, so the 9 pm Thursday sailings caught people off guard. This was a factor of how quick BCF was able to add Route 10 sailings, without a good idea of the effect on Route 11.
On board lighting. Customers have noted that the ship internal lighting is 'full brightness' in hallways and spaces near cabins, which can be particularly problematic when people are trying to relax/sleep. The Northern Expedition does not currently have a way to dim/reduce lighting, but they can look at what may be possible technically and by regulation.
7. On-board cultural/tourism ambassadors. Pt Hardy Tourism is keen to re-introduce on board ambassadors if possible, and Elizabeth sought a way to re-introduce how to analyse what may be possible. BCF noted that as long as the proposal appeared to be something sustainable on a consistent basis, they would consider a proposal.
Discussion followed regarding options for displaying tourism info on screens on board.

8. Route 26 afternoon sailing change options. There had been recent email communications regarding the lack of making sailing connections with flights at Sandspit. FAC members had identified some problems with the sailing options BCF shared. BCF noted that the FAC should continue to submit ideas for schedule tweaks that would work better for the community, and they can ensure that any changes would work operationally. BCF asked for a specific Route 26 request from the FAC to see what may be possible.
9. BC Ferries 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. 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. 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.
 - iv. System growth concerns. BCF hears community concerns around whether ferry service is robust enough to handle possible future growth demand, and they are focused on planning for reacting to any changes (upward or downwards) of capacity and demand.
 - v. BCF environmental initiatives. In pursuing further corporate responsibility, BCF is working with government on being a leader in minimizing our environmental footprint, including LNG usage, electric propulsion options, etc. BCF is focussed and has a plan to continue to reduce their impacts. In a related matter: the diesel-electric hybrid Island Class of vessels will see two of them in operation in 2020 and four more within a few years afterwards. The design allows for a future conversion to full-electric mode.
 - vi. Consultation. BCF continues to engage with communities in a more wholesome manner, including working with other stakeholders on combined efforts.
 - vii. Fuel surcharge. BCF is about to implement a fuel surcharge of 1.5% (Northern routes are exempt), as this mechanism serves to mitigate fuel price volatility.

Action Items¹:

Item	Who	By When
1. Confirm the food service in peak and off-peak seasons.	Lance	Completed
2. Look into what is technically possible for dimming N.Expedition lighting.	Lance	End-June

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.

3. Confirm what content is currently being displayed on vessel screens on the N.Exp or Adv, and what organization coordinates these videos (to the point of future possible tourism videos).	Darin	End-June
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