

# Southern Gulf Islands Ferry Advisory Committee

## March 31, 2023 Meeting Agenda

9:00 AM – 11:00 AM, Mary Winspear Centre Room 2B

### 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
<b>Territorial Acknowledgement, Intros and welcome</b>	5 mins
<b>Information section</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. BC Ferries Operational updates               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Marine Superintendent</li> <li>b. Terminals</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	10 mins
<b>Follow up</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Saturna priority               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Swartz bay terminal highway traffic lanes</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	5 mins
<b>Information section</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. BC Ferries mobile app launched</li> <li>2. New CEO – Nicolas Jimenez</li> <li>3. Inter-Island through fares via Swartz Bay</li> </ol>	N/A
<b>New Items</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communication in Service Notices</li> <li>2. Schedules for Route 5</li> <li>3. Improve signage for offloading on route 1</li> <li>4. Order of loading lanes</li> <li>5. Stacking traffic on the 4:20 by destination</li> <li>6. Village Bay: Pulling of the Swartz Bay directly onto the Sturdies Bay vessel</li> <li>7. Swartz Bay: Commercial traffic on 10:10 am sailing</li> <li>8. Terminal development timelines</li> <li>9. Tsawwassen: Trailer at Berth 2</li> <li>10. Procedures for passengers with mobility issues</li> <li>11. Information on current capacity displayed on website</li> <li>12. Last minute reservations for medical appointments – Route 9</li> <li>13. MIALS Bus</li> </ol>	1.5 hours
<b>Final Questions &amp; Close</b>	5 minutes

## Southern Gulf Islands Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting Topic Log March 31, 2023

**NOTE:** notes summarizing the general discussion of meeting participants are 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: Tamara Olson, Natalie McCall, Capt. James Bradley, Capt. Hardeep Grewal, Camrin Hillis, Tudor Popa, Brian Anderson

Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure:

FAC:

Public:

Operational Updates	
<b>Marine Superintendent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>QCUM will be returning to SWB in early April to resume service on RT 5 and Salish Heron will return to TSA and prepare for RT 9A service. One of the right angle drives (RAD) of the Queen of Cumberland was damaged while providing service on another route. Emergency maintenance was completed on the vessel and while we had hoped to have the issue solved earlier, the part required is on back-order. Repairs are now planned for the week of April 10.</li> </ul> <p>The FAC asked if it was possible to keep the Salish Heron on the run. BCF informed the FAC that the Salish Heron is required on Route 9a (Tsawwassen – Southern Gulf Islands) to provide service over the Easter long weekend. To avoid service disruption, the work will be conducted in the evening after the last sailing. Once the dates have been confirmed for the repairs, we will update the community.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment and training are ongoing for all licensed and unlicensed staff As BCF continues to hire qualified staff, it is important to note that it takes approximately 6 months for these licensed mariners to learn to navigate the Juan de Fuca Strait. Therefore, there will be some lead time until we can operate at full staff capacity.</li> <li>Capt. James Bradley will be taking over the region starting April 1, 2023</li> <li>Monday - Friday morning: Lyall Harbour to Otter Bay transfer To ease the vessel congestion at Village Bay, reduce the time to load route 5 vessel, increase on-time performance and provide consistency of service the following schedule changes will be going back to the practice:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lyall to Otter Bay transfers will be transferred to Route 9 (not Route 5)</li> <li>Travellers wishing to go from Village Bay to Otter Bay will travel on Route 9 at 11:35 departure from Village Bay to Otter Bay (not Route 5 at 11:15 departure).</li> </ul> <p>FAC asked what the wait time would be for those waiting at Lyall, which BCF informed them would be a 20 minute wait time. There was general support from the FAC and understood the change back and how it will help improve congestion.</p> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Terminals</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will be proceeding with a project to replace the sewage treatment facilities at Lyall Harbour on Saturna. There has been a delay to the project but it will still proceed. There are no expected impacts to operations. A similar project is currently ongoing at Fulford Harbour</li> <li>Ongoing planning and design work for the Village Bay berth 1 rebuild project – forecasted completion is March 2027 and includes updated shelter and 2 lanes.</li> <li>Mayne Island Community bus trial starting on April 18<sup>th</sup> – priority loading for the bus to and from Mayne Island to provide a sustainable and secure form of travel that provides seniors affordable access to critical off-island needs (medical and other).</li> <li>Snow removal at Village Bay: plan for next winter</li> </ul> <p>Due to the grade of the gradient of the Village Bay terminal, we were unable to use the existing contractor due to safety concerns. BCF continues to look at contractors across the region to ensure adequate and efficient snow removal when needed. Due to insurance hikes within the snow removal industry, there is currently a shortage of local operators which has made it difficult to secure local and reliable contractors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BCF is currently looking for food vendors who may be interested in providing food service at Village Bay Terminal at the location of the previous food vendor.</li> </ul> <p>FAC inquired into how BCF is advertising for this vendor. All information and application process for vendors is available on the BC Ferries website: <a href="https://www.bcferrries.com/our-">https://www.bcferrries.com/our-</a></p>

[company/procurement](#)

**ACTION:** T. Olson to provide FAC with advertising materials on how local vendors can apply to become a food vendors at the Village Bay terminal.

## Information Section

<p><b>Customer Experience</b></p>	<p>The BC Ferries mobile app launched at the beginning of March and offers the ability to have push notifications, for information like Service Notices, delivered directly to a traveller’s mobile device.</p>
<p><b>Community Relations</b></p>	<p><b>Update on new CEO, Nicolas Jimenez</b></p> <p>Nicolas is keen to learn more about FACs and in the coming months will be setting up meetings with each of the FAC Chairs. Your patience is appreciated as he acclimates to his new position as BC Ferries President and CEO.</p> <p>The British Columbia Ferry Services Board is pleased to announce the appointment of Nicolas Jimenez as President and Chief Executive Officer of BC Ferries, effective March 6, 2023.</p> <p>Nicolas is a strong, strategic leader who led structural reforms at ICBC in recent years, returning the auto insurer to financial health and delivering more affordable insurance to customers. He has a Master's Degree in Public Administration from both Harvard University and the University of Victoria as well as a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science from Wilfrid Laurier University.</p> <p>Over the last 20 years, Mr. Jimenez has held a number of senior roles at ICBC, taking over as President and CEO five years ago.</p>
<p><b>Inter-Island through fares via Swartz Bay</b></p>	<p>Inter-island through fares via Swartz Bay - we were asked to bring it back to the table 'in a few years'. There is no process in place at this time to accommodate inter-island rates through SWB. Exceptions and 'work around' are made as required when there are service disruptions</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> N. McCall and C. Hillis will follow up with our revenue teams on the ability of our systems to facilitate this. An update will be provided to the FAC and community in early May.</p>

## Follow Up Items

<p><b>Saturna priority:</b></p>	<p>Traffic has been prioritized for Saturna customers on the 15:10 sailing. The team has become well versed in the requirement and the frequency of loading errors has drastically decreased  <b>ACTION from the previous meeting:</b> Cam to work with his team to consider separating lane usage between reserved vehicles and SGI vehicles outside the booths.</p> <p>UPDATE: Terminal Operations assessed the requirements to separate the travel and it was determined that due to terminal configuration and staging needs, separating traffic is not feasible at this time.  The FAC noted that business vehicles have been left behind due to staging vehicles bound for Saturna into overflow lanes. Currently, there is a Saturna-only ticket booth however, this booth has been found to multitask with other routes during peak traffic times.</p> <p>The FAC requested permanent wording on all schedules of the Saturna 3:10 pm sailing priority.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> C. Hillis to investigate the multitasking of the Saturna-only ticket booth.  <b>ACTION:</b> C. Hillis to remind terminal staff to be diligent of any Saturna-bound vehicles that may be staged in the overflow lanes (the 30s) to be loaded with priority on the 3:10 pm sailing.  <b>ACTION:</b> T. Olson to pass on the request for permanent wording of Saturna priority loading on the 3:10 pm sailing.</p>
<p><b>Swartz Bay Terminal Highway Traffic Lanes</b>  <b>BCF – 8 mins</b></p>	<p>Swartz Bay Terminal highway traffic lanes – update on summer plan  Ticket booth staffing levels will be increased during the peak season to improve customer throughput at the booths and reduce dependency on traffic control and occasions when traffic backs up on the highway.  FAC noted that while there is a dedicated booth for Southern Gulf Islands, this booth can be found multitasking with traffic bound for other routes causing long lineups during peak hours. This results in traffic lining up down the highway.  <b>ACTION:</b> C. Hillis will investigate the multitasking of the SGI ticket booth  <b>ACTION:</b> Joint stakeholder meeting to be set up including, FAC, BC Transit, Municipality, RCMP and possibly MoTI.</p>

<p><b>New Items</b></p>	
<p><b>Communication in Service Notices</b>  Dave M. – 6 mins</p>	<p><b>Service notices: more information is needed especially in light of cancellations and rerouting</b>  FACs noted that <i>holding-in-dock</i> service notices are no longer being posted. Having the service notice sent out after the sailing has left with a delayed departure time is not helpful for those travelling to the terminal. BCF agreed that this could be reinstated and will bring it to the attention of the BCF teams.  It was also noted by the FAC that emails are not being received in a timely manner. BCF apologizes for this delay. It was noted that due to the volume of service notices, there can be a delay in the email reaching</p>

	<p>inboxes. BCF recommended downloading the new BCF application and ensuring push notifications are enabled on your mobile device. All updates are also available via Twitter and the website. Instructions on how to configure push notifications are available here: <a href="https://www.bcferries.com/app">https://www.bcferries.com/app</a></p> <p>The FAC requested information on when the earliest a service notice can go out, and when the latest a service notice can be received. This information would be useful for those taking early morning sailings.</p> <p><b>ACTION: T. Olson to investigate when the earliest a service notice is sent and the latest a service notice can be received. T. Olson will share this information with the FAC chairs.</b></p> <p><b>ACTION: T. Olson and N. McCall to provide an easy “how to” for the mobile app</b></p>
<p><b>Schedules for Route 5</b></p> <p>Mary G. and Dave M. – 6 mins</p>	<p><b>FAC requests to retain the present Route 5 schedule for the balance of 2023, in order to have a chance of providing capacity through peak season.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schedules for Route 5 are currently available up until September 4<sup>th</sup> online and downloadable PDF schedules and printed schedules will be available the week of March 20 for the next date band (Apr 01, 2023 - May 04, 2023).</li> <li>• PDFs for each date band will be distributed approximately 2 weeks prior, with printed copies to follow shortly after and prior to the new schedule starting.</li> <li>• The schedule for the remainder of the year is being reviewed and is planned to be available online by end of April.</li> </ul> <p>The FAC requested confirmation that the summer schedule will remain the same as last year. BCF confirmed that the schedule will remain the same.</p> <p>The FAC thanked BCF for the new printed schedules that were released before the changes were implemented. However, they noted that the spring/summer schedule is the same colour as the fall/winter and therefore it is difficult to discern which is current.</p> <p><b>ACTION: BCF will take this feedback back to the marketing team.</b></p>
<p><b>Improve signage for offloading on Route 1</b></p> <p>Mary G. – 4 mins</p>	<p><b>Improve signage for the other access (Sharp left turn and out the side road) when the SGI ferry arrives when Route 1 is unloading. It isn’t clear where to go.</b></p> <p>There is a large sign on wheels that is moved into position when the east exit is used. In addition to the signage, employees are deployed to provide motorist direction.</p> <p>The signage at the Swartz Bay terminal was removed several months ago by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) to undergo necessary improvements. MOTI has noted they will be replacing this signage.</p>
<p><b>Order of loading lanes</b></p>	<p><b>Loading lanes out of order - still an ongoing issue at Swartz Bay in particular but happening on occasion at other terminals.</b></p> <p>We endeavor to load in the order of arrival but on occasion are required to load by vehicle type, UCD requests, PRAs, destination etc.</p> <p><b>ACTION: C.Hillis and Capt. Grewal will follow up with the Terminal and Vessel teams on procedures.</b></p>
<p><b>Stacking traffic on the 4:20</b></p>	<p><b>Stacking traffic on the 4:20 pm sailing by destination.</b></p>

<p><b>by destination</b></p> <p>Mary G. and Dave M. – 10 mins</p>	<p>We continue to separate traffic by destination for the Mayne and Galiano sailing at 1620. This is a request from the vessel to allow us to expedite the discharge of Galiano traffic to reduce any potential delays for the Rt.5a transfer vessel.</p> <p>The FAC noted that the 4:20 pm sailing from Swartz Bay does not consistently stack traffic at the terminal by destination. Furthermore, when all vehicles are unloaded on Mayne Island, the reloading shuffles the traffic.</p>
<p><b>Village Bay: Pulling off the Swartz Bay directly onto the Sturdies Bay vessel</b></p> <p>2 mins</p>	<p><b>Is it possible to pull off the Swartz Bay directly onto the Sturdies Bay vessel at Village Bay and not go up the hill?</b></p> <p>This requires further investigation however may create an unsafe situation when vehicles attempt to deviate from normal offloading practices – it’s always safer to follow the flow of traffic until the decision point to transfer back into the holding lanes.</p> <p>Terminal Ops noted that due to the safety of terminal staff and to keep the flow of traffic, we are unable to pull out or separate traffic.</p>
<p><b>Swartz Bay: Commercial traffic on 10:10 am sailing</b></p> <p>Dave M. – 5 min</p>	<p><b>Commercial traffic on 10:10 sailing out of Swartz Bay. Salish ships now regularly load 15 - 18 heavy commercial vehicles (dump trucks &amp; semis) with some overloads, with peak season approaching there is a considerable concern as to the possibility of substantial overloads on this sailing. Is there an ability/plan to limit heavy traffic on this sailing?</b></p> <p>At this time there is no consideration to limit commercial traffic on this sailing. The Salish vessels have already increased capacity on the route and we do not have plans at this time to prioritize one customer type over another.</p> <p>We are continuing to grow the relationship with the Saanich Peninsula &amp; Gulf Islands CRD to increase awareness of when commercial traffic is travelling to the gulf islands. Especially those carrying heavy loads or when multiple trucks are travelling.</p> <p>The FAC suggested implementing a reservation system to ensure that ferry-dependent communities do not need to wait 4 – 6 hours for the next available sailing due to construction activity. Alternatively, the FAC would like to be aware when there are sailings with a large number of commercial vehicles travelling to ensure that residents can prepare accordingly.</p> <p>At this time BCF has no plans to limit commercial traffic. BCF provided information on the status of residential priority and MoTI background, but that it is being heard around many island communities.</p>
<p><b>Terminal Development Timelines</b></p> <p>Mary G. – 5 mins</p>	<p><b>Terminal rebuilding plans</b></p> <p>Swartz Bay Redevelopment Plan The Swartz Bay redevelopment plan has been changed in scope, schedule and budget since the PT5 Submission. As part of BC Ferries’ annual Capital Plan review process, lower-priority scope items, including the administration building, were removed from the project plan in December 2019 to support the affordability of the overall Capital Plan within the PT5 determination. In the following spring, the Company’s pandemic response deferred the remaining scope by five years.</p>

	<p><u>A look ahead at SWB projects:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renovations at the Lands End Café at the Swartz Bay terminal. These updates will replace the end of life equipment and modernize the look, feel and offerings of the café similar to recent upgrades to vessel-based outlets – expected completion this spring (2023)</li> <li>• SWB sewage transfer system upgrade – expected completion this spring (2023)</li> <li>• SWB electrical service updates – expected completion this fall (2023)</li> <li>• SWB Berth 1 updates – expected completion 2024</li> <li>• SWB Berth 5 upgrade – expected completion 2025</li> </ul> <p><b>ACTION:</b> T. Olson to provide an update on Terminal updates for Sturdies and Village Bay Timelines</p>
<p><b>Tsawwassen: Trailer at Berth 2</b></p> <p>Charlene and Diana – 4 mins</p>	<p><b>The Trailer at Berth 2 is too small for Route 9 passengers and it is a long way coming down from Berth 2 upstairs lounge.</b></p> <p>At this time it is not in the budget to update the waiting room trailer in Tsawwassen for Route 9. Improvements that have been made include signage above the door identifying it as a waiting area, and a Terminal Attendant is also scheduled to assist passengers for Route 9 when loading/unloading</p> <p>BCF acknowledges that this space does not accurately represent the brand and quality of care of the corporation or an accurate first impression of the SGI communities. Customer Experience is working to improve the space to the best of our ability given budget constraints.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> N. McCall to work with the Customer Experience team to investigate what improvements can be made to the trailer at Berth 2 for Route 9 passengers and report back to the Community Relations team.</p>
<p><b>Procedures for passengers with mobility issues</b></p> <p>Diana, David and Mary – 10 mins</p>	<p><b>Communication between crew and people with accessibility concerns</b></p> <p>Policies are in place for passengers who are travelling and have requested special care or assistance when loading.</p> <p>Loading Officers have been directed to try to do their best to park mobility-challenged passengers according to their needs. Parking vehicles by the washroom or in close proximity to the stairs are two options that should always be taken into consideration and communicated to the passengers.</p> <p>A reminder of the policy was recently sent out to the teams.</p> <p>FAC Co-chair, M. Greenwood expressed her passion for the well-being of travellers with mobility constraints. She shared that those with mobility issues require: the full swing of the door, access to an elevator, access to a washroom, staged in an area without any grade (for balance), room for mobility devices between vehicles (such as walkers and wheelchairs) and compassionate communication with staffs (people may experience a fight/flight response if feeling constrained).</p> <p>BCF expressed a sincere apology for any mishandling of mobility constraint cases aboard vessels and requested that if any concerns should arise for the FAC Co-Chairs to inform T. Olson who will ensure it is passed on to Capt. Hardeep Grewal, and provide the sailing time and date. BCF takes these issues seriously</p>



	<p>and would like to improve our quality of service to passengers experiencing difficulties.</p>
<p><b>Information on current capacity displayed on website</b></p> <p>Diana – 3 mins</p>	<p><b>A request has been made to have an explanation provided that FAC could post to their social media</b></p> <p>For standard vehicles, they would just need to look at the estimated deck space available (41%) as this shows the total remaining deck space available. This estimate doesn't include vehicles outside the terminal waiting to buy a ticket. This is a blend of the deck space.</p> <p>If an overweight was travelling they would likely look further to see if the Mixed vehicle deck space available (Car, van, SUV, truck, bus, RV) is full as this would limit if they can make the sailing. For standard vehicles, they would still be able to get on as they can load on either deck.</p> <p><b>ACTION: T. Olson will work on creating an update to the community pages that can easily be shared and referenced back to.</b></p> <p>The FAC noted that the term "mixed vehicle" is particularly confusing. For example, a passenger with a car is investigating whether to book a sailing, they will look for the percentage of available space for the standard vehicle. If there is no space available for a "standard vehicle", then they may not understand that their vehicle can also be staged on the "mixed vehicle" deck space.</p>
<p><b>Last minute reservations for medical appointments – Route 9</b></p> <p>Mary G. – 5 mins</p>	<p><b>What is the procedure when travellers need to make reservations for last-minute appointments (eg specialist) for Route 9 when there are none available?</b></p> <p>Customers are asked to call 1-888-223-3779 (1-888-BC FERRY) and our reservations team will do their best to accommodate the request and/or take the next steps to assist.</p> <p>This has been added to the community pages in the FAQ section.</p> <p><b>ACTION: T. Olson to confirm Customer Care hours of operation.</b></p>
<p><b>MIALs Bus</b></p> <p>Diana and Meg – 5 mins</p>	<p><b>Update on the MIALs Bus community project</b></p> <p>Mayne Island Community bus trial starting on April 18th – priority loading for the bus to and from Mayne Island on specific sailings to provide a sustainable and secure form of travel that provides seniors affordable access to critical off-island needs (medical and other)</p>

### Final Questions and Close

Follow up meeting

BCF suggested a follow-up meeting be held for the FAC and Community Relations team 3 months after the FAC meeting to follow up on the actions items from today's meeting.

**ACTION: T. Olson to follow up with Co-Chairs on possible dates and send out an invitation.**