

Tri-Island Ferry Advisory Committee

Spring 2023 Meeting Agenda

Virtual

Wednesday, May 10, 2023 – 1:00pm – 2:30pm

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
Introductions and welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of agenda 	10 mins
BC Ferries Updates <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Operational updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marine superintendent • Community Relations • Customer Experience 2. Follow up Item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ferry Line up signage for Sointula • Quadra Queen II Plaque 	15 mins
Group Discussion <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Early morning run from Sointula 2. Priority boarding for commercial vehicles 3. Signage for turnaround at Port McNeill terminal 4. Discount for commuters 	1 hr
Final questions and close	5 mins

Note: Public comments and/or questions are welcome at the end of the meeting – time allowing.

Attachments:

1. Meeting topic log

Tri-Island Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting Topic Log May 2023

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: Steve Anderson, Natalie McCall, Tamara Olson, Peter Bolza, Captain Derek Sweet, Arielle Houghton

Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure: Brian Jonker

FAC: Melissa Fletcher, Michelle Carson, Hans Madsen, Tosha Nelson, Dennis Buchanan

Public: Michelle Pottage

Operational Updates	
Marine Superintendent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Marine Superintendent for Tri-Islands, Captain Derek Sweet <p style="color: #0070c0;">BCF is always looking for ways to improve the existing operations by talking to the community. One way we've been able to make improvements is by scheduling the crews in way that attracts and retains staff. In areas around the fleet, we have gone to a day-by-day schedule to create a better work-life balance for employees, we will continue to work on this option for Tri-Islands as well. All Senior Master positions are now filled. We have one Mate's position remaining to be filled. If you know of anyone interested please share with them. FAC is welcome to phone or email if there are any questions. This contact information can be obtained through T. Olson.</p>
Community Relations – FAC updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference Update: Feedback has been gathered from FAC members and is now being reviewed. Once the review is complete, BCF will work on incorporating the feedback into a revised TOR, which will be done in collaboration with the FAC Chairs. • New follow up tracking sheet being created. This is to help with the continuity of information and to help ensure actions are noted.

Follow Up Items	
<p>Ferry Line up signage for Sointula</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signage will now read: Space will be limited to the equivalent of 30 vehicles on the first sailing to Sointula and Port McNeill on Sundays. • Signage has been ordered for Alert Bay and is set to be delivered on Friday, May 12. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sign should be ready in next week or two depending on staff availability. • FAC noted there are two signage issues that have been brought up at previous meetings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign for Alert Bay - change from 15 vehicles to 30 vehicle – this is completed. • Sign for Sointula - clear signage to distinguish where the ferry line-up is vs where the business parking is. • The challenge on Sointula is that it is unclear which vehicles are lining up for traffic and which are parking to go to local businesses. There has been some heated moments amongst the as a result of people being confused on who is in the line-up and as a result some have missed the ferry. A revised sign could be a useful tool to improve communications and reduce tensions. • ACTION: N. McCall will work with P. Bolza and FAC to look at the area and work with T. Nelson to formulate wording for signage. • BCF states that if the sign is not on BCF property then there are restrictions as to what can be done, but are happy to work with business owners or MoTI to have signage created and installed. • The FAC shared that there are currently signs in place, however they are unclear. The existing signs only need to be improved. • ACTION: T. Nelson will send photos of existing signs and send them to T. Olson to help investigate if these are BCF signs or if they belong to the District or another party. – COMPLETED
<p>Quadra Queen II signage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BCF looked into getting the signage from the Quadra Queen II, unfortunately, the crews were not able to locate the original, but would be happy to work with the school to get a list of names and have a new one created and sent to the community. • It appears that the commemorative sign/plaque which listed the students who had graduated from the local high school and received a BCF award has unfortunately gone missing. With a list of those students, BCF can make a new plaque for the new vessel on the route. BCF can work with the community and FAC to formulate wording for the new plaque. • ACTION: M. Fletcher will talk to the principle at the high school, or school District 85 office, for a list of names of the students.

Group Discussion	
<p>Early morning run from Sointula</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An earlier sailing was requested for Sointula residents; however due to the crewing and schedules the earlier run could not be accommodated. There is not enough time in the schedule. • BCF is always looking for ways to improve the schedule if we can and balance the impacts to each community. • While in the past we were not able to accommodate an earlier sailing from Sointula, with the change in scheduling for crew, there may be opportunity to revisit. • FAC noted that community consultation would be needed as by making an earlier sailing it would lead to longer trip for other passengers from Alert Bay heading to Pt. McNeill. • The FAC noted that if data is needed to examine how many people would ride an earlier ferry from Sointula, there may useful statistics from the Alert Bay Terminal Development period when there was a trial run with the 7 am sailing and 8 am sailing that included Alert Bay and Sointula. • ACTION: S. Anderson to work with terminal and vessel managers to explore options for scheduling an early morning sailing as a first step.
<p>Priority boarding for commercial vehicles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FAC would like to discuss the options for priority boarding for commercial vehicles • FAC shared that in Sointula there is an aging population and would like to encourage more families and young adults to move to the island. Access for commercial vehicles to be able to get priority or assured loading on ferries to create more economic potential would help this. • BCF notes that there is a process in place for priority/assured loading. A written request sent through the FAC for assured loading and is to include what sailings, dates, times, terminals and size of vehicle. The FAC would forward this request to community relations team who will work with terminal and fleet staff to coordinate on a case-by-case basis. • An FAC member shared that while a case-by-case approach may work for local businesses, it does not work for those coming from off island that may lose revenue if they miss their sailing. • FAC chair M. Fletcher suggested that any changes for assured or priority loading also includes information that can be shared with residents so that people are educated as to why commercial vehicles may bump ridership.
<p>Signage for turnaround at Port McNeill terminal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion at last meeting around informing crew that turn around vehicles don't pay but they do need to go to the back of the line. A request for signage to explain this. • When there are large events in Alert Bay and there are multiple sailing waits, people jump the que by taking a ferry to Sointula only to ride the same ferry back to Port McNeil and get priority loading onto the next sailing to Alert Bay. This is especially problematic when there are oversized vehicles like tour buses or logging trucks that are going to both islands that may have legitimate reasons to stop on Sointula, but still end up preventing others who have been waiting for longer at the Pt McNeill terminal from making their next sailing. The FAC's proposed solution is to allow those people to continue to ride the ferry for no additional cost, however anyone making a connection should go to the back of the line before boarding the next sailing.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P. Bolza shared that currently, the Pt. McNeill staff have no instruction to put people coming from Sointula at the back of the line when they arrive at the terminal. They are treated as “in transit” and for that reason they receive the priority. • It has not been an issue with the current ferry, but with the summer it could be a problem. • ACTION: P. Bolza and T. Olson to work with terminal staff to explore options. • ACTION: T. Nelson and M. Fletcher to investigate if this is an important issue to the community and let T. Olson know so we can explore what next steps. • An FAC reminded that the sailing between islands at no additional cost was originally created as part of a condolence to those who were not able to get a direct route to Pt. McNeill.
Discount for commuters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC Ferries offers an Experience Card that when used provides discounted rates on specific routes. Port McNeill – Malcolm Island (Sointula) – Cormorant Island (Alert Bay) is included in these routes. • More information can be found online: https://www.bcferrys.com/routes-fares/ferry-fares/experience-card • To view fares and the savings from the Experience card click below, and visit page 24: https://www.bcferrys.com/web_image/h89/he1/8939457544222.pdf • A resident from Alert Bay was asking if there could be a discount for commuters to drive their cars back and forth every day.
Final Questions & Close	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T. Nelson shared that the community misses riding the ferry to Alert Bay and would support a “long way” and a “short way” ride back to Sointula from Pt. McNeill. This was a bonding opportunity for both communities.