

Gabriola Island Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting

Overview: Aggie Hall, Gabriola Island, November 18, 2016

In Attendance:

Committee: Steve Earle, Howard Houle, Jane McCall Woods, Heather Nicholas, Jim Ramsay, Peggy Richardson

BC Ferries: Mark Collins - VP Strategic Planning and Community Engagement, David Hendry- Strategic Planning Director, Captain Lance Lomax- Marine Superintendent, John MacDonald- Terminal Operations Regional Manager, Darin Guenette-Public Affairs Manager

Meeting Highlights:

The objective of the meeting was to: discuss previous issues and explore options for addressing issues brought to the FAC from the community.

The next meeting is planned for sometime in spring 2017.

Issues Summary and Resolution Plan

A. Issue: Experience Card

Definition: Summary:

- FAC continues to hear concerns from the community regarding the minimum top-up levels on the Experience Card, particularly as they increase each year.
- BC Ferries is not currently considering any changes to the E-Card, but reminded all that these levels are set in step with the fare of the highest cost E-Card route.
- FAC suggested keeping the initial buy-in level as is, but decreasing future reload levels.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: consider FAC suggestion to lower reload levels for the E-Card.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Check with Pricing section to test feasibility of lower 'reload levels' only.	David	End-January

B. Issue: Proposed changes to ferry lineup on Gabriola

Definition: Summary:

- The FAC had previously done extensive research around how vehicles line-up on Taylor Bay Rd, and risks associated this.

- Two alternate line-up options were proposed to MOTI, but no response to discuss this issued has occurred.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: reach out to MOTI to try and find appropriate operational manager.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Contact MOTI to discuss options for meeting	John M.	Completed; meeting on island pending

C. Issue: Medical priority loading

Definition: Summary:

- People carrying a valid ‘medical priority letter’ have not been loaded as priority and had conflict with other customers/crew members.
- FAC suggests four ideas to improve consistency of the process:
 - in-car signage to indicate ‘medical priority’.
 - designated staging/parking area (permanent or movable) near front of line up.
 - empower/inform employees to understand priority process.
 - issue a notice/release clearly explaining applicable policy and procedures.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: review feasibility of FAC suggestions with crew to determine if improvements could be made.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Discuss suggestions with crew	Lance	Three months

D. Issue: Health care worker

Definition: Summary:

- A request came to FAC from Island Heath to allow priority loading for a health care clinician.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: Process request letter with appropriate operational people.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Review priority request with Terminal operations staff and provide reply	John M.	Three months

E. Issue: Weekend sailing addition pilot

Definition: Summary:

- Data on the traffic levels experienced for the sailings added to the weekend schedule in the previous peak season appears to show that ‘new traffic’ has resulted.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: continue to implement these additional sailings for another peak season, as part of the two-year pilot.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

F. Issue: Evening sailing discount proposal

Definition: Summary:

- FAC had made a previous proposal to discount sailings after 9 pm up to 25% of regular fare.
- BC Ferries has analysed expected results of a discount and has determined this will not provide a break-even result; an official reply will follow soon.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: provide official reply to FAC.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
Send official reply on discount proposal	Mark	asap

G. Issue: Operational update

Definition: Summary:

- On-time performance: strong most of the year, with a 70-80% range in the peak season.
- No planned vessel refits until late 2017, when Bowen Queen will be relief vessel.
- BC Ferries having difficulty finding timely and reliable snow removal services for Descanso Bay terminal; FAC to ask around for possible help.

BC Ferries Commitment to Resolution: none required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

H. Issue: Vehicle discount promotion

Definition: BC Ferries is coordinating a 50% fare discount on passenger vehicles, across all route, at select sailing times, between November 14 and December 18. Details can be found on bcferrries.com.

BC Ferries input/follow-up: none required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

I. Issue: Minor 44 Class project

Definition: BC Ferries is standing up a ‘Minor 44 Class’ project. Highlights include:

- New class of vessels to be the new, smallest class in the fleet
- Two ships built first, with up to five more to follow
- First two vessels to be deployed on Route 18 and 25, allowing retirement of North Island Princess and the Howe Sound Queen, by approximately 2020. Noted earlier: Quinitisa to replace HSQ on Route 6.
- Vessels to be 44 AEQ and 300 people capacity
- Near Coastal 2 classification; deployable on large variety of routes
- Engagement sessions planned in applicable communities; seeking input on amenities

BC Ferries input/follow-up: none required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

J. Issue: AEQ restatement

Definition: BC Ferries has recently standardized the calculation of the measurement of area on a deck used to approximate the average space of a vehicle – the AEQ (automobile equivalent). One AEQ is now 2.6 m X 6.1 m of deck space.

This restatement will affect utilization figures, and this fact will be stated in the next report provide to the Ferry Commissioner. New Quinsam AEQ is: 63.

BC Ferries input/follow-up: none required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		

K. Issue: FFDEI update

Definition: BC Ferries in continuing work in the Fare Flexibility and Digital Experience Initiative project, with significant updates in point-of-sale, website and ticketing technologies over the next two years. This will in turn allow for dynamic pricing to be offered on the Major routes, followed by the other reservable routes, starting in 2018. The overall goal of this work is to increase discretionary traffic travel by offering discount opportunities in lower utilized sailing times, to interact more efficiently with the customer and to bring in new traffic to the system.

BC Ferries input/follow-up: none required.

Action Plan:

Action	Responsible	Date
n/a		