

# GABRIOLA FERRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

October 23, 2019

## Informal Notes of Meeting (not an official record)

### In attendance:

#### ***Gabriola FAC representatives:***

Steven Earle (Chair)  
Heather O'Sullivan (Vice-Chair)  
Scott Colborne (Islands Trust)  
Vanessa Craig (RDN Regional Dir.)  
Peggy Richardson  
Paul O'Sullivan  
Jim Ramsay

#### ***BC Ferries Representatives:***

Darin Guenette (Public Affairs Manager)  
Brian Anderson—VP Strategic Planning and Community  
Engagement  
Captain Lance Lomax – Marine Supt. Central Coast  
Peter Simpson (Director, Fleet Operational Strategy)  
John Macdonald (Reg. Mgr., Terminal Operations)  
Steve Nussbaum – A/Director, Terminal Operations

### Absent:

Peter Briscoe, Michael Brown, April Vannini

### **Welcome/Agenda Approval**

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 am by Chair Steven Earle who acknowledged that we were meeting on the traditional territory of the Snuneymux'w people. The agenda was approved and introductions made. Steve thanked BC Ferries for changes made to evening sailings, which have alleviated many of the problems previously raised. He noted that one Gabriolan had asked that consideration be given to changing Dangerous Cargo to an earlier sailing on Wednesdays, but that some fuel suppliers confirm they need the full span of time to complete their deliveries, so a change is not recommended by the FAC.

### **Agenda Items**

#### **a. Descanso/Nanaimo Harbour Terminal Development Process**

- Darin reported that terminal development plans at both terminals are ongoing, including public engagement activities, while Island Trust rezoning and OCP amendments are being processed, which will take an estimated 18-24 months to complete.
- There is no update on the Nanaimo Harbour engagement status.
- The Ferry Commissioner did not approve a BCF request for higher fare increases and has ruled that 2.3% will be the limit for rate increases in the years 2020 to 2024. While BCF is now seeking opportunities for efficiencies, existing projects such as the new Island Class ferries will be unaffected as they are already planned in the budget.

#### **b. Island Class update**

- First of the new Island Class ferries, which use hybrid electric/diesel propulsion, will go into service in spring 2020. In about 10 years, once BC Hydro is ready, it is planned that these vessels will be retrofitted to use all electricity. The two vessels for Route 19 will arrive in fiscal 2022.

**c. Route Report**

- In a review of the summary reports provided in advance of this meeting, a monthly summary of overloads, similar to that done for OTP was requested. **ACTION: Peter Simpson indicated that such breakdown can be prepared and he will so arrange.**

**d. Taylor Bay Lineup and traffic control**

- Steve referred to an August 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting with John Macdonald (BCF), Stefan Yancey (MoTI), Cpl. Jennifer Prunty (RCMP), and Chris Morris (BCF) to work on solutions. Following a further review of the situation, Steve received a very inadequate response from John.
- The myriad of problems with the Taylor Bay lineup are ongoing and not getting better, and must be addressed.
- The Gabriola FAC responded with a detailed proposal, but there was no subsequent response from BCF:

**1) Signage**

- a) "Don't leave gaps in the line-up" (x ~5) (by BCF)
- b) "Continue line-up on Ivory Way – turnaround at the bottom" (by BCF)
- c) "Oversize vehicles remain on Taylor Bay Rd" (by BCF)
- d) "No U-turns" (x ~5) (by MoTI, because unofficial signs are ignored)
- e) "Do not block driveway" (x2) (by MoTI)

**2) Mitigation**

- a) Remove some lower branches from trees in some areas of the lineup (especially in last 100 m before Ivory Way) to allow cars to pull further off the road and to improve visibility (MoTI)

**3) Publicity (BCF)**

- a) Notices in the paper
- b) Handouts at Nanaimo Terminal (first to everyone and then just to visitors)
- c) Message by e-mail to all on the "Service Notices" list

**4) Implementation**

- a) Trial line-up attendants (say for 4 weeks in September and October)
  - b) M.V.A. violators are identified and plate number sent to RCMP and BCF
  - c) Continued observation by RCMP when possible.
- John reported that more signage is coming and agrees we need a traffic management plan, which should include a protocol for trucks and other large vehicles in the lineup. He has submitted a proposal for a 15 day pilot project with flaggers in 2020; first level approval has already been given. The existing company that provides flaggers for BCF will be used. **ACTION: John Macdonald to develop the traffic management plan in cooperation with the FAC and MoTI, and will provide criteria by which flaggers will perform their duties.**
  - The measures to determine success of the pilot project need to be established between BCF and the FAC.
  - A toilet for Taylor Bay Rd. has been budgeted for summer 2020.
  - John will continue to work with the FAC on developing a traffic management plan that will ameliorate the situation.

e. **Gabriola Announcements**

- Steve noted that complaints regarding the safety announcements while at dock at the Gabriola end are continuing, and apparently the volume has recently been increased. Lance Lomax responded that safety announcements are specified by Transport Canada and the volume had to be increased following a recent T.C. inspection.
- Lance indicated one of the issues is that various homeowners near the Descanso dock have different opinions about where the announcements should take place.
- Steve showed a slide indicating three options for location of the announcement recordings, two of which are away from the dock, as is the case on the Nanaimo Harbour side.

f. **BCF Updates**

- Darin reported that the new BCF website will be launched in 2020. This will feature additional functionality and be suitable for mobile platforms. For the major routes, a reservations booking process and fare flexibility will be introduced. There are no plans to extend the reservations to minor routes. Current conditions will reflect space available rather than space already taken.
- Heather and Scott requested that a reduced minimum charge be made to experience cards considering the needs of those with low incomes. Darin indicated the limit is set to discourage people from getting a card for only one trip, and is set at two trips on the most expensive route. **ACTION: Darin will investigate having the top up minimum reduced, if not the original rate.**

g. **Public Input**

**Taylor Bay Road issues:**

- Several people spoke of the very dangerous route along Taylor Bay Road, which is narrow and twisty, with inadequate room for a curb lane and two active lanes.
- Driveway access is a major concern for one owner opposite the first turnaround where another “Do Not Block Driveway” signage has been promised but not yet been provide.

**Ferry Announcement Issues:**

- The differences between the process in Nanaimo and Gabriola don't make sense to Gabriola residents who feel they are being unfairly penalized.
- Of the three options presented earlier, Option C appeared to have the approval of most members of the public in attendance.
- Lance indicated he is trying to move the volume control for announcements to the bridge. Darin noted that a shortened message is also being worked on.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – Various concerning Taylor Bay Road and Announcements

**Next Meeting** – Spring 2020

Minutes recorded by Jim Ramsay