

# GABRIOLA FERRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

October 19, 2020, 3:00 to 4:30 pm (meeting conducted by Zoom)

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

A recording of the meeting is available here:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o04\\_xuly3XPes3NyO6clrtnPT\\_36TtQ6/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1o04_xuly3XPes3NyO6clrtnPT_36TtQ6/view?usp=sharing).

### 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  
Carly McMahan  
Peter Briscoe

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

Darin Guenette (Public Affairs Manager)  
Brian Anderson (VP Strategy and Community Engagement)  
James Bradley (Marine Supt. Central Coast)  
Peter Simpson (Director, Fleet Operational Strategy)  
John Macdonald (Reg. Mgr., Terminal Operations)  
Mika Desloges (Mgr. Corporate Social Responsibility)

**Members of the public:** Don Elkington, Henry Reeves and Derek Kilbourn for the Sounder

### Regrets:

April Vannini

### **Welcome/Agenda Approval**

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by Chair Steven Earle. The agenda was approved, and introductions made.

### **Agenda Items**

#### **a. Update on New Vessels**

- Peter Simpson reported that the two vessels designated for Route 19 are under construction and are expected to be completed on time. Delivery estimates for Island Class vessels #3, 4, 5 & 6 are still on time for late 2021 or early 2022. Introduction into service is still planned for early Spring 2022.
- BC Ferries will meet with the FAC and public in early 2021 to discuss schedule planning for the new vessels. Carrie McIntosh, BCF's Schedule Manager will be involved in that effort.
- Darin mentioned that descriptors for the remaining Island Class vessels are being identified, but not yet finalized. Steve noted that the FAC is disappointed with the first two names identified for the vessels now in service, which seems to be a perpetuation of the use of colonial language and a failure to seize an opportunity for reconciliation with First Nations. Steve has talked with leaders of the Snuneymuxw First Nation, who would like to participate.
- Darin noted that BCF wants to have vessel names that are not route-specific because they may be moved from one route to another.
- Later in the meeting, Brian reported that he just received an update from Rosa who is coordinating the new vessel naming process for BCF. Possibilities will be restricted to names not already included in the International Ships' Registry. A

shorter list of possibly suitable names will be compiled and then communities will be asked for input.

- Scott suggested First Nations should be asked to participate in the naming process from the outset.

**b. Medical assured loading**

- Steve noted that the current policy is temporary, but the FAC believes it is superior to the previous policy and should continue. Brian replied that the current policy has been mandated by the Province due Covid 19 and will be in place at least until the pandemic is over, but may remain the default policy going beyond that change.
- Peggy reported that the relaxation of need for specific dates of travel on doctor's letters has been a great boon as medical appointment particulars are often subject to change. She hopes that this situation will remain long term and requests that BCF designate a point person to assist with issues that arise from the public. Peggy hopes that better communication, press releases, and other input to the website, etc., might improve the public's understanding of the policies and procedures around medical assured loading.
- Brian indicated BCF will be coming to the community and also to the medical community for input on this issue.

**c. Priority loading for essential services**

- John McDonald reported that the Ministerial order covering assured loading contains criteria including need for arriving 20 minutes ahead of scheduled departure, and BCF has applied the same criteria to priority loading as well.
- Steve explained that a system-wide policy on this issue is not workable because sailing delays are a daily occurrence on Route 19 for most of the year. When essential service providers are forced to arrive 20 minutes ahead of the scheduled departure, and can then have to wait for up to 1.5 hours, it doesn't really work as "priority loading". **ACTION: John McDonald will review this situation and report.**

**d. Priority loading for Snuneymuxw elders**

- Steve reported that the Gabriola Historical and Museum Society has asked that priority loading status be approved for certain elderly Snuneymuxw members who frequently travel to Gabriola to assist with programming at the School and Museum.
- Darin noted that BCF does grant such status to elders visiting other Islands, with support from the community involved. BCF needs details to be able to consider this further.
- **ACTION: Steve will talk to the School and Museum to obtain details about such travel.**

**e. Update on terminal redevelopment**

- Brian reported that capital projects including terminal redevelopments remain on hold due to impact of Covid 19 pending the annual review in December. However, BCF is still working on pre-planning of these projects.
- Steve asked if the information provided to us in August at the FAC Chairs meeting that construction will soon proceed on the Nanaimo side terminal is no longer correct. Brian confirmed that, but noted that a tie-up birth at that

terminal, at least, must be ready for introduction of the Island Class vessels in spring 2022.

**f. Village trail and village-ferry connection**

- Steve reported that the Village Trail is currently under construction and a local group is planning for eventual connection down the east side of North Road, crossing Taylor Bay Road with a cross-walk. He suggested it would be optimal if pedestrians leaving the vessel (other than those heading to the bus or vehicles who need to egress to the terminal area on the right) could leave on the port side and proceed up the hill; thus avoiding the need to cross traffic lanes.  
**ACTION: BCF to consider this as part of their ongoing terminal redevelopment planning.**

**g. Traffic safety and queuing issues on Gabriola**

- Steve referred to traffic safety and queuing issues repeatedly raised with BCF without satisfactory resolution and read a letter that the FAC plans to send to the new Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, the BC Ferries Commissioner, the BC Ferry Authority and the BC Ferry Services Board indicating that:
  - Taylor Bay Road is not suitable for a lineup that includes the number and size of vehicles waiting for this ferry,
  - there is no supervision of the line-up by BC Ferries,
  - vehicles often block adjacent lanes,
  - people walking and using mobility aids, people riding bikes, and people driving vehicles are being placed in unsafe situations every single day,
  - it is not if another collision with serious, fatal consequences happens, but when,
  - BC Ferries Executives are failing us here, and we ask you to utilize all and any measures available to you through legislation to help us.
- Steve emphasized that the FAC wants to go on record to say the situation is not acceptable to this community and we believe BCF is primarily responsible.
- John Macdonald said the toilets and flaggers are again being planned for the 2021 budget, at the same amounts that had been budgeted but were unused in 2021 due expectation that traffic would remain low due to Covid 19, which did not prove to be the case. Steve asked that BCF consult the FAC re timing and other details.
- Brian noted that a number of BCF terminals have limitations which remain a systemic challenge, but long-range plans for terminal redevelopments are aimed at getting as many waiting cars off the road and into the compound area.  
**ACTION: Steve and Brian to arrange a meeting on this issue.**

**h. Key information for travelers to Gabriola**

- Peter Briscoe noted there is no information provided at either BCF terminal about the round-trip nature of this route. He proposed that a statement to that effect should be printed on the tickets and a small sign posted.
- Peter Simpson said it is not possible to add a message to the program that produces the tickets; however it was suggested the Route Name field could

possibly be used to add that data. ACTION: Peter Simpson to review this situation.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** nil

**Next Meeting** – Spring 2021, which the FAC hopes can be in person rather than via Zoom, although a virtual meeting would be better than no meeting.

Minutes recorded by Jim Ramsay