

## **Meeting Details**

Date: November 17, 2017  
Time: 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm  
Location: BC Ferries Head Office – Suite 500 - 1321 Blanshard Street

## **Attendance**

### ***Public Interest Representatives***

Hugh Mitchell, Canadian Hard of Hearing Association  
Les Chan, Disability Resource Centre  
Pat Danforth, Disability Alliance BC  
Jane Sheaff, Seniors Serving Seniors  
Debbie Yorke, Seniors Serving Seniors  
Sandra Jenkins, Inter-Municipal Advisory Committee on Disability Issues  
Barbara Schuster, CNIB

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

Karen Tindall, Director of Customer Care, Customer Care Department  
Bruce Paterson, Fleet Technical Director, Engineering  
David Carroll, Director, Terminal Construction, Engineering  
Chris Gauld, Manager, Terminal Standards, Terminal Engineering  
Stephen Nussbaum, Superintendent, Customer Service Standards

### ***Guest***

Martene Hartnell, Customer Relations, Customer Care

### ***Regrets***

Jeff Davidson, Director, Retail Services, Food and Retail Operations  
Melanie Lucia, Director, Catering Operations  
Rob Seitz, Superintendent, Terminal Development  
Captain Chris Frappell, Marine Superintendent, South and Central Coast  
Sheila O'Neill, Catering Superintendent, Central Coast  
Garnet Renning, Customer Service & Sales Representative, Customer Care  
Darin Guenette, Manager, Public Affairs  
Steve Shardlow, Training Manager, Terminals  
Scott Heron, Co-Chair, Spinal Cord Injury BC  
Hanna Leavitt, Alliance for Equality of Blind Canadians  
Mary Ellen Meunier, Seniors Serving Seniors  
Valerie Thoem, Independent  
Marnie Essery, Inter-Municipal Advisory Committee on Disability Issues

## Introduction

Co-Chair Karen Tindall welcomed the members of the committee.

Review of Minutes – May 17, 2017 meeting. Minutes approved by the committee.

### ***Update on Action Items from previous meeting:***

1. Induction Loop System – Action: Karen Tindall to review Hugh’s suggestion.  
**Follow-up:** Karen Tindall will continue to look into expanding induction loop past Point of Sale and seating areas. Induction loops will become common on all routes in the future.
2. Self-Declaration Information Cards – Action: Karen Tindall will email a copy of the card along with the minutes.  
**Follow-up:** Karen Tindall will re-send a copy of the Self-Declaration card to everyone.
3. Truncated domes on sidewalks - Action: David Carroll will look into Pat Danforth’s suggestion and update the group at the next meeting.  
**Follow-up:** David Carroll responded that BCF did look at this option for Denman and Hornby terminals.

## **Public Interest Representatives shared updates from their organizations/communities**

### ***Pat Danforth***

Pat shared that the Canadian Standards Association/federal government is introducing new legislation in spring 2018 and accessibility standards will increase. David Carroll responded that BCF refers to municipal legislation currently and BCF has our own accessibility guidelines, which are being updated.

### ***Sandra Jenkins***

Sandra shared that Inter-Municipal Advisory Committee on Disability Issues is still encouraging organizations to have unisex/universal washrooms with accessibility features to accommodate opposite sex caregivers.

Sandra also noted that from what her organization is hearing, accessibility loading accommodation has improved. Karen noted that she is pleased to hear that, but recognized that as traffic continues to increase, we will have to make adjustments to ensure this continues to be the case.

### ***Hugh Mitchell***

Hugh brought up the federal government legislation for persons with disabilities and mentioned that there are different groups/stakeholders contributing/being consulted. He explained that with this legislation, TV captioning and more widespread screen readers are being considered.

## ***Barbara Schuster***

Barbara shared that CNIB is celebrating 100 years of service in 2018 and they are holding a few events to celebrate the centennial year. CNIB was started because there were so many veterans returning home from the war blind. Thousands were affected by the Halifax explosion/fire on December 2, 1917.

## ***Jane Sheaff***

Jane explained that Seniors Serving Seniors is working on a Return to Health program. SSS recently selected 20 volunteers to provide practical help to frail seniors after long stays in hospital; the volunteers will help the seniors with tasks not covered by home care workers. There is an information and referral service for this in the CRD. Currently, 18% of BC citizens are seniors. By 2031, 24% of BC citizens will be seniors. Upon announcement of this fact, the group discussed the importance of reminding people to take the stairs if they do not require use of the elevator. Jane shared that she is becoming semi-retired in January and her counterpart Debbie Yorke will carry on in her place.

Karen suggested that perhaps the nurse/geriatrician/trainer for the volunteers, Donna, could possibly provide some training to BCF on how to assist frail seniors, as it is clear that the number of seniors in BC is increasing.

Action: Karen will discuss this possibility with Steve Shardlow.

## ***Les Chan***

Les shared with the group that December 3 is International Day for Disabled Persons. There is a Disabled Art Show at the Victoria Art Gallery taking place on December 1 and 2, 2017. It is free to the public and there will be 27 artists showing their works.

## ***Hanna Leavitt***

Hanna shared a YouTube video with Karen, which was shared at the meeting, though Hanna was absent. The video showed how a way-finding app assisted visually impaired travelers to reach the correct platform for their travels on the London Tube. At the next meeting, Hanna will provide an update.

Action: BC Ferries will look into this technology further

**Break: 2:15 - 2:30 pm**

## **BC Ferries Updates**

### **Terminal Update:**

Stephen Nussbaum joined the committee over the phone and provided updates on foot passenger loading issues for passengers requiring wheelchair assistance and closed car deck vehicle loading.

Stephen explained that BCF received mostly positive feedback about our wheelchair assistance service; negative feedback comes up when wheelchair pushers are unavailable. Stephen updated that the peak labour budget has now been increased to better accommodate wayfinding and mobility challenges at our terminals. Stephen mentioned that the partnership between catering staff and

terminal staff is working well for the wheelchair service (those passengers are loaded on first and off last).

Next, Stephen talked about how in the early days of the closed car deck regulation enforcement, there seemed to be a lack of understanding/communication between the terminals and the vessels as well as the terminals and the customers; BCF is working on improving this.

Les asked about exemptions and Stephen explained that those needing to be able to remain on their vehicle for disability/medical reasons can request upper deck loading and we will coordinate. Stephen added that on our northern routes, we already enforce this regulation.

### **Vessel Development Update:**

Bruce Paterson provided an update on the upcoming vessel replacements and mid-life upgrades.

#### *Mid-Life Upgrades:*

The *Spirit of British Columbia* is in Poland for its mid-life upgrade, which is expected to be complete in mid-February. The *Spirit of Vancouver Island* will be heading for its mid-life upgrade in the fall of 2018 and returning in the spring of 2019. In their mid-life upgrades, both vessels will be converted to be dual-fueled to operate on Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and marine diesel. There will be additional changes to the lifesaving equipment and passenger areas. The gift shop will now have change rooms; there will be a coffee bar; the arcade will be removed.

#### *Route 28:*

Last year, the Provincial Government gave approval to reinstate a direct service route which had previously been modified/reduced due to Government Service Level Reductions. BCF purchased a new vessel, the *Northern Sea Wolf*, to operate on the route. The vessel is on its way from Athens, Greece and will be arriving in mid-December. It will undergo a refit prior to beginning service in Summer 2018. The vessel will sail 2-3 times per week from Port Hardy to the mid-coast.

#### *Minor 47 Class Vessels:*

BCF is working on plans for this new vessel class expected to be delivered in 2019. Minor 47 Class vessels will have an accessible passenger lounge on the main car deck. There will be chair lift systems fitted on these vessels. They will operate on routes between Powell River and Texada Island as well as Port McNeill, Sointula and Alert Bay. They are going to be built in Romania and will be heavy lifted to BC once complete.

#### *Major Route Initiative:*

BCF is planning to retire its C Class Vessels (*Queen of Cowichan, Queen of Oak Bay, and Queen of Surrey*). We are currently working on various terminal development plans as well as strategic plans for the major routes. BCF is looking at options as natural gas and battery power to fuel our future vessels while taking into consideration current trends such as self-driving cars, car share programs, millennials not using cars as often and demographic changes.

## **Terminal Development Update:**

David Carroll provided an overview of several terminal development projects taking place as well as plans for the future.

David shared that there are many “Master Plans” happening for the terminals as we plan their development. David explained the differences between plans for Horseshoe Bay and Swartz Bay, for example, are significant. BCF is consulting professionals to ensure that plans meet all of the functional requirements. We have terminal re-build plans in place for Denman Island, Hornby Island, Nanaimo Harbour, Gabriola Island, Crofton and Vesuvius Bay.

David explained that the Prince Rupert timber trestle was recently replaced with an enclosed steel trestle. We are currently waiting on the shelter and walkway; the project is expected to be completed in December 2017/January 2018.

David shared that in the future, we will be better able to manage the steep slopes of our gangways by having more landing spots on vessels for gangways to connect. We would ideally like to be able to use our gangways in all tides and we must take this into consideration as we plan new vessels and berths.

David mentioned that LED lighting was added at Duke Point and Departure Bay terminals, offering improved visibility.

Improved signage was added to several terminals, which will help with way finding.

### *Escalator Project:*

BCF is currently replacing the up and down escalators at Horseshoe Bay, Tsawwassen and Swartz Bay terminals. Replacement of the up escalators is expected to be complete before the end of 2017, while replacement of the downs will take place in early 2018. The escalators used by BCF are commercial grade and have a 25-year life span. The replacements are more energy efficient and offer better visibility. This project is a longer one, as the escalators are located in high traffic areas.

## **Other Business:**

### *Co-Chair Position:*

Members are encouraged to put forward a name of a committee member and a vote will take place at the committee’s next meeting on May 2, 2018.

### *Video Walk Through of Terminals:*

David Carroll brought up the virtual tour of our terminals and vessels which we are hoping to offer our customers as part of our new website redesign project; this would offer a 360-degree view, where amenities are located, emergency assembly stations and restrooms. Karen has raised it, and with new VP, Janet Carson, Karen believes the project is well aligned to go ahead.

**Meeting Adjourned 3:30pm**

## **Next Meeting Dates:**

May 2, 2018 and November 7, 2018