

Agenda Item No. 1c
For: February 9, 2006

FERRY PASSENGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FPAC)

Agenda for Wednesday, January 4, 2006

**Convene at 12:00 p.m. – Adjourn by 1:15 p.m.
Embarcadero Room
Pier One, Port of San Francisco**

Approval of December 7, 2005 Minutes

1. Service Issues
Route 97 TransLink Availability
2. Operational Issues
MV Del Norte Drydock Schedule
BART Project Update
 1. Five-Year Fare Program
4. Other Items/Future Agenda Items
5. Member/Visitor Comments



FERRY PASSENGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FPAC)

Minutes of Wednesday, December 7, 2005



Embarcadero Room, Port of San Francisco, Pier One

FPAC Members Present: Frances Barbour-Hayden, Ken Eichstaedt, George Griswold, Frank Johnston, Robert Karfiol, Lee Kleinecke, Erik Selvig, David Tollen

Staff Present: Pascale Soumoy, Associate Planner; Alan Zahradnik, Director of Planning; Helen Haas, Customer Relations Supervisor; Jim Swindler, Ferry Division Manager

Visitors Present: Dwight Steeves, Visitor; Denise Turner, Port of San Francisco

Approval of Minutes of November 2, 2005 The minutes were approved.

1. Service Issues

December Schedule Changes: Members were reminded that on December 12th, several morning Larkspur departures will depart 5 minutes earlier. This is being done to ensure on-time performance for the 7:50 a.m. Larkspur departure. The similar changes in the Sausalito schedule are related to the time necessary for the bicyclists to board and disembark from the ferry. A great deal of effort has gone into informing passengers of this change; sandwich boards, seat drops, e-blasts and posters are part of the public awareness campaign.

2. Operational Issues

BART Seismic Retrofit Project Update: Golden Gate Ferry (Ferry) has met several times with BART officials, resulting in a verbal agreement on the concept of having BART build a new, temporary terminal at Pier D for Ferry use to mitigate the demolition of the San Francisco Ferry Terminal (SFFT) during BART seismic construction. Pier D is the “stub-out” located on the Ferry Building pier between the SFFT and the Vallejo Ferry Terminal and is part of Ferry’s leasehold. Discussions are ongoing in order to develop a written agreement. The BART retrofit project will take two to three years and will involve demolishing the existing SFFT.

3. Other Issues

- Several members commented that the 5:50 a.m. MV Mendocino trip has been having electrical outages. All the lights and the ventilation system shut down as the vessel gets under way. Within a few minutes, the deckhands have turned everything back on, but this has happened several times in the past week. Jim Swindler noted this concern and will look into it.

- Mr. Swindler added that, due to the low morning temperatures, the mechanics will be starting the MV Del Norte and MV Mendocino early to allow these ferries to warm up before passengers board.
- Member repeated that the clear plastic intake vents on the MV Mendocino are very dirty, and asked that they please be cleaned.
- The MV Del Norte will be going to shipyard soon. Ferry will use the alternative schedule and will inform passengers in advance.
- The Spaulding retrofit will be done in the fall of 2006. Ferry has received the full set of plans from the marine engineer, and the US Coast Guard is currently reviewing them. Ferry plans to publish the Request for Proposals this spring, award the contract this summer, and send the ferry to the shipyard right after baseball season ends.

4. Five-Year Fare Program

Alan Zahradnik presented the most recent fare program information to FPAC. The Finance Committee reviewed the fare proposal in November, and staff is moving forward to conduct public outreach toward implementing the changes in July 2006. Staff is recommending a 5% fare increase per year over the next five years.

The fare program was developed to raise \$9 million in revenue, system-wide, over five years. The Ferry portion could raise about half that amount. Fare recovery would be raised to 40%, from the current 33% rate, over the next five years. This amount was recommended by staff after a peer review showed other passenger ferries have fare box recovery rates from less than 30% to 67%. Staff acknowledged that increasing fares can lead to losing customers, so suggested that reaching 40% recovery within five years was an acceptable goal for both the District and the passengers. This plan assumes a 1% patronage growth, the Larkspur Ferry Terminal parking lot being the main constraint.

Please note that the Special Event fares are the exception to the fare program.

Larkspur-San Francisco Fares with 5% increase

| | Cash | Frequent Rider Ticket |
|----------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| Year 1 | \$6.80 | \$4.25 |
| Year 5 | \$8.65 | \$5.45 |
| Seniors Year 1 | \$3.40 | |
| Seniors Year 5 | \$4.30 | |

Sausalito Ferry Fares with 5% increase

| | Frequent Rider Ticket |
|--------|------------------------------|
| Year 1 | \$3.60 |
| Year 5 | \$4.60 |

This fare program allows the District some flexibility for an adjustment to the 5% fare increase through an annual review to track if revenues and expenses are on target.

Mr. Zahradnik explained that a Five-Year Fare Program requires a formal public hearing and a public comment period. To better inform the public about why and how the District is meeting its financial goals, three hybrid informational open houses and public hearings will be held February through March. One open house/public hearing will be held in each county – San Francisco, Marin and Sonoma – and all three will be scheduled in the evening. Each open house will precede the formal public hearing, allowing the public to review the proposal and ask questions of staff before offering comment to board members during the formal hearing.

Member noted that it is difficult for ferry passengers to attend any meeting at the Toll Plaza, especially in the morning. The member asked that staff please consider this when choosing times and locations of hearings. Can organizers consider a downtown San Francisco location where commuters could attend on their lunch hour?

Jim Swindler added that he learned during his monthly conference call with operators of the Passenger Ferry Association that Golden Gate Ferry was the only operator on the conference call that had not added a fuel surcharge to the fare. All other operators temporarily increased their fares by 12 to 20%.

4. Other Items/Future Agenda Items

- **2005 Christmas Ornament:** 2005 Ornaments are available to committee members for \$13.
- **Merry Ferry:** Merry Ferry 2005 will begin December 12th. Various businesses and restaurants will participate in events and drawings on the 10:10 a.m. trip. On Saturday, December 17th, Santa will be on the Ferry as well.
- **Ferry Holiday Decorating:** Back by popular demand, classes from several Marin and Sonoma County schools will ride the Larkspur and Sausalito ferries in order to decorate them. This will occur during the weeks of November 28th and December 5th.
- The MV Mendocino is now set up for wireless access. The company that set this up has an uninterrupted connection across the bay to allow email, web access, video screening, etc. Mr. Swindler asks any FPAC members that use this technology to please test it and report back how it works. Currently it is a free pilot project.

5. Member/Visitor Comments

None made