



Board of Director Regular Meeting Minutes

December 15, 2020 Recorder: Donna Halvorsen

1. **Call Meeting To Order:** Harvey Mc Donald called meeting to order at 10:00am.
2. **Roll Call:**

Chair	Klawock	Jeff Nickerson	present via teleconference
Vice Chair	At Large	Dee Dee Jeffreys	present via teleconference
Sec/Tres	Craig	Otis Gibbons	present via teleconference
Director	Thorne Bay	Harvey McDonald	present via teleconference
Director	Coffman Cove	Brian Wilson	present via teleconference
Director	Hydaburg	Anthony Christianson	joined at 10:30 via teleconference

Staff Present: Donna Halvorsen

Staff present via teleconference: Ron Curtis and Walter Marsh

Public Present: None

Public present via teleconference: None

3. **Approval of Agenda** Motion: Approve agenda as presented; moved by Harvey McDonald and seconded by DeeDee Jeffreys. Motion approved unanimously.
4. **Approval of Minutes** Motion: Approve minutes from September 15, 2020; moved by DeeDee Jeffreys and seconded by Harvey McDonald. Motion approved unanimously.
5. **Public Comment** none
6. **Correspondence** none
7. **Manager's Report**

To: Inter-Island Ferry Authority Board of Directors

From: Ron Curtis - General Manager

Subject: Q2 Update

- 1) **Operating Status** – We are currently running 6 days a week. The management team is evaluating the 7th day (Tuesday) on a monthly basis. At this time ridership does not dictate adding the 7th day. We also believe at this time with the POW still down, it is prudent to save wear and tear on the Stikine. We are operating at a capacity of 100 passengers, approximately half capacity. We are using a passenger wellness form before passengers are allowed to board. We are requiring face coverings in certain instances, and highly recommending usage in all instances. All employees are required to wear face coverings when they cannot maintain safe distancing and I have asked them to wear masks when they are in public view.

- 2) M/V Prince of Wales status – The POW is still down. We have the Buy America waivers in place for the parts and the work. We have the matching funds for the federal contract expenses. We are scheduled for this in calendar Q1.
- 3) MV Stikine Status – The Stikine had engine issues and needed to have an in-frame overhaul to both engines. We did not sail most of the month of October because of this. This overhaul was anticipated we had to do it before the Federal funds were available. We used about 400K for this maintenance. Chrissy and Walt are working to have the dollars we spent out of pocket applied to match in future Federal contracts on the Stikine.
- 4) We needed to submit a new travel plan to be compliant with all the new mandates and guidance. We are operating under that plan and it was approved by the state.
- 5) We are working all avenues on recouping funding because of all our maintenance challenges over the last year. We have applied for a Federal appropriation through Lisa Murkowski's office. Working on receiving a 2nd 250K legislative grant with Senator Stedman's office. We have applied for funds through the CAPSIS program, Chrissy has been working her tail off on the 5311 grants and we have started receiving Cares Act funding.
- 6) As a Management team we have been working through the policy manual update. It is going slow, but we are making progress.
- 7) We approved a \$250 Christmas bonus for all employees. This was down from last year's \$500 due to company performance.
- 8) Staffing – Managers have been doing interviews and hiring for open positions. We are hoping to be fully staffed come spring.
- 9) On October 6th, Wrangell voted to leave the IFA. No further action is needed at this time.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ron

Harvey states he hopes we can get the additional \$250 to each employee at some future time as they work so hard for IFA but understands why it is lower than last year.

Jeff states that from a PR standpoint, to mandate wearing a face covering would be a good idea but understands why we are not requiring it at this time. But as far as the public is concerned, they think we aren't doing all we can to protect POW and others. Ron replies that there is no recourse if we require travelers to wear face coverings; if we have a conflict on the vessel, it is a difficult thing to deal with when there is no close harbor to get a non-compliant person off the boat. We are doing everything we can and we are highly recommending travelers to wear them. Jeff states he didn't want to carry it out that far but believes people would police themselves. Ron states if the Board mandates mask wearing, we will follow through with that but in counseling with Attorney general of state of Alaska, and reading everything about it, there is no 'force of law' on wearing masks. Otis suggests that we could change 'recommended' to 'required' on our signs because it is a stronger statement. 'Mandate' means it's a law but 'required' is more of a reminder for people; that strengthens the language without putting any policing by crew in place. DeeDee and Jeff agree with Otis, and DeeDee adds that we need to let crew know that they are not to police mask wearing. Harvey states that he agrees with Ron allowing crew not to wear mask when handling the lines during arrival and departures but that we need to make clear that its the only time its allowed. He continues that when employees wear a mask it sends a message that the IFA cares; we could add 'for everyone's health please do your part in protecting others and wear proper face covering' to our signage to help convey that message. Brian states that as a business owner he agrees with Ron. He has never had an issue with 'masks optional' but when he required it, he got a lot of negative feedback like threats of lawsuits, boycotts and it just opened up many issues and there is no lawful recourse on the issue so optional is the way to go. He said he was on the ferry and the crew was all masked up, he was and most of the travelers were masked up too. He's been talking to many other businesses on island and everyone is dealing with the same thing; business is down for everyone

right now and they are trying to get all the business they can and requiring masks adds to the problems so most are opting out. Harvey agrees with Brian but states that our employees can demonstrate it is a very serious subject and we hope that our rider ship will listen to that. Donna states that we are already using the word 'required' in our signage for example 'ID is required,' so if we use required regarding face coverings but with no enforceable actions, we are sending a conflicting message. Crew and Agents will be fielding more questions because although we say masks required, only some of the people will be wearing one. This is a controversial and even political choice that people have so we've got to take a middle ground; our employees can set the example by wearing a face covering and we can put signage up to strongly recommend it for travelers. Donna continues that these actions will show people that everyone's health and safety are the IFA's top priority and will keep us moving forward on this issue. Ron adds that the Attorney General said as an employer we can mandate our employees to wear a mask and does have force of law behind it because they are representing you; everyone else has no force of law to back it up. He continues that if the Board wants to mandate it for customers, we will do it. To summarize Ron states we spent a lot of hours working through this, and our state-approved Travel Plan outlines mask usage and he recommends continuing as we are; employees must wear proper face covering while in public's view unless handling lines, and we strongly recommend masks for customers. Harvey and DeeDee agree, and DeeDee asks if we can add 'mask verbiage' to Passenger Wellness Screening form too, Donna states yes. Jeff asks what sign says, Donna states it says "the IFA strongly recommends wearing proper face covering at all times, thank you IFA management.' Jeff will go with Ron's direction but only concern still is if they trace a positive case to the IFA we will get a lot of negative PR.

8. **Old Business** none

9. **New Business**

a) Motion: Accept City of Wrangell's letter of resignation officially withdrawing from participation in the IFA Board; moved by Otis Gibbons and seconded by DeeDee Jeffreys. Motion approved unanimously. Otis suggests the IFA write a letter of acceptance of their withdrawal letter and a thank you to Wrangell, all agree.

b) Motion: Approve Resolution No. 2021-03 approving galley contract with OUR T.E.A.M.; moved by DeeDee Jeffreys and seconded by Harvey McDonald. A roll call vote was taken and motion passes.

Chair	Klawock	Jeff Nickerson	yes
Vice Chair	At Large	Dee Dee Jeffreys	yes
Sec/Tres	Craig	Otis Gibbons	yes
Director	Thorne Bay	Harvey McDonald	yes
Director	Coffman Cove	Brian Wilson	yes
Director	Hydaburg	Anthony Christianson	yes

c) Motion: Approve Resolution No. 2021-04 approving vending machine use permit with Haida Vending; moved by Harvey McDonald and seconded by Brian Wilson. Motion approved unanimously.

10. **Board Comments** Otis states he'd like to see increased signage all around saying 'please wear your mask' and asks about governor's budget. Ron replies that the preliminary budget didn't show anything for IFA yet, and Otis comments that we have to start talking to them now to be sure we get in. Ron has been talking to Dennis Scott who is new chief of staff for Senator Steadman and will keep Board

updated. Harvey asks about our quorum requirements now. Donna states that we have 6 active members, 5 from participating municipalities and 1 at-large and our quorum # has not changed, its still 4. Harvey states that if we want to have 7 voting members, we could have 2 at-large members or could reach out to Hollis about becoming a voting member. Jeff states he appreciates the job employees have been doing with all the things going on since our last meeting; he really appreciates the work being done and wished we could have given the \$500 but understands why we can't.

11. **Schedule Next Meeting** tba

12. **Adjournment** Motion: Adjourn meeting at 10:41am; moved by DeeDee Jeffreys and seconded by Harvey McDonald. Motion approved unanimously.