

FERRY PASSENGERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (FPAC)

Minutes of Meeting of Thursday, November 7, 2024



FPAC Members Present: Chuck Hornbrook, Jordan Jaffe, Carlin Long, Nathan Lozier, Erik Selvig, Chris Snell, Michael Stryker

Guests Present: Mike Ghaffary, Prospective Member

Staff Present: Chris Bearden, Director of Ferry Operations; Michael Hoffman, Deputy General Manager, Ferry Division; Collette Martinez, Manager, Ferry Operations; Carlena Natouf, Supervisor, Customer Relations; Francis Tremblay, Marketing and Communications Specialist; Barbara Vincent, Principal Planner; Josh Widmann, Associate Planner

A. Call to Order. Chair Chuck Hornbrook called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

B. Roll Call. A roll call was taken and a quorum was recognized.

C. Approval of Meeting Minutes of August 1, 2024. Members reviewed and approved the minutes with no edits at 12:07 p.m. Christopher Snell motioned to approve and Jordan Jaffe seconded.

D. New Updates

1. Rider Survey Presentation

Barbara Vincent, Principal Planner, presented the 2023 ferry rider survey. Jordan Jaffe asked if the survey could provide the number of unique individuals riding in total in a given period and their frequency. Prospective member Mike Ghaffary stated frequency of service is important as well, and that riders are more likely to ride if they have more trip options. Barbara Vincent stated that the survey data reflects this. Michael Stryker asked if ridership is increasing and if riders are traveling more frequently on the ferry. Chris Snell stated that the riders are already there, and the trips are already there, we just need people to travel more frequently. Jordan Jaffe asked what can be done with the survey data and was told that a fast ferry boat will be added on weekends. Mike Ghaffary asked about more frequent Tiburon service and Michael Hoffman stated there is currently not sufficient demand. Carlin Long requested more evening service. Collette Martinez noted the system is experiencing more demand for earlier service, so that will be the focus. Michael Stryker referred to the wake wash analysis findings and asked whether the catamarans could go faster as their wake impact is less than the Spauldings due to the two-hull configuration. Michael Hoffman responded that the current environmental process would be stalled if this were to be included, as it was not in the original scope.

2. Operational Issues

- a. Ridership Updates. Josh Widmann reported ridership statistics for July, August, and September 2024. July total ridership year-over-year is up 11 percent, with Larkspur up 39 percent and Tiburon up 2.2 percent. August total ridership is up 5.6 percent year-over-year with Larkspur up 18 percent, while Tiburon is down 2.7 percent, and Sausalito down 8.5 percent. August 2024 contained one less weekday than 2023. September year-over-year ridership on all routes is up

15 percent, including Larkspur up 32.5 percent, Sausalito down 4.5 percent, and Tiburon down 2.4 percent. Sausalito and Tiburon weekday September averages were actually up compared to 2023 but the weekends were down. Michael Stryker asked why SMART's Connect shuttle in Larkspur isn't running every day. Chris Bearden stated that it is a pilot program with a 12-rider capacity and is operating limited days to curtail costs. He also said the District has worked with SMART to determine the minimum transfer walk time from Larkspur Ferry to Larkspur SMART to include all walking speeds. SMART operates different headways compared to Larkspur Ferry due to single tracking.

- b. Service Updates. As of September 30, Angel Island service is operating a reduced schedule. The next sign-up will be January 13, 2025.

3. Updates and Other Items

- a. Vessel Updates. Michael Hoffman updated the committee on scheduled vessel maintenance. The M.S. *San Francisco* vessel will return before Thanksgiving break and the M.V. *Mendocino* vessel will return after the break.
- b. Terminal Updates. Michael Hoffman commented that San Francisco berth work starts soon; the contract is being finalized. A schedule will be available by the next FPAC meeting. Sausalito landside work, managed by the City of Sausalito, will be completed in December 2024.
- c. Return to Office Timeline Discussion. Michael Hoffman stated the second quarter Downtown San Francisco office vacancy rates were the highest of this calendar year. No major updates were reported about companies requesting employees to return to the office more frequently. Francis Tremblay mentioned that the District's website event calendar includes many activities accessible by Golden Gate Ferry. The Marketing Department is promoting Google maps, Apple maps, and the Transit app for ferry schedule information.

E. Committee Business

1. FPAC Initiatives

- a. Larkspur Ferry Service and Parking Expansion Study. Michael Hoffman stated the public comment period had closed and the District is reviewing comments received. Jordan Jaffe inquired about the overflow lot and was told the District is looking at various improvements at both lots.
- b. Sonoma-Marin Bike Share. Josh Widmann informed FPAC that the program with Redwood Bikeshare officially launched with a ribbon cutting on November 6. There will be a six-week progress report available to staff in December and this can be presented at the next FPAC meeting.
- c. 2025 Meeting Schedule and Discussion Topics. The committee agreed to meet first Thursdays in February, April, June, September, and November. Discussion topics will include Larkspur Service expansion, new build vessel updates, San Francisco berth repair, schedule changes, a District real estate overview, SMART coordination, and Clipper 2.0.

2. Membership Recruitment.

Mike Ghaffary informed the committee that he is still seeking membership and was told after he attends a second meeting in a row, he is eligible to become a member.

F. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

- G. Adjournment.** The committee agreed to reconvene on Thursday, February 6, 2025, from 12:00 p.m. to 1:10 p.m. at the Port of San Francisco.