



Vallejo Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

February 24, 2005, 6:30 pm
Vallejo City Hall – 4th Floor Conference Room

I. Attendees & Preliminaries

Robert Boyce, representing the 6:30am ferry riders
Pat Mathews, representing the 6:00am ferry riders (Ridership Chair)
Teri Booth Koster, representing the 8:00am ferry riders
Chip Coundjeris, representing the 6:30am ferry riders
Kim Trotter, representing the 8:00am ferry riders
Mohsen Sultan, guest and rider of the 6:30am and 8:00am ferry
Wayne Shepard, representing the 8:00am ferry riders
Kevin Donnelly, Blue & Gold Fleet – Baylink Administration
Marty Robbins, Baylink General Manager (Acting Committee Chair)

- Meeting called to order at 6:40pm
- Introductions

II. Old Business

SNACK BAR

- It has been reported that some new products are slowly being introduced.
- Request for “line forms here” signage was discussed. The issue appears to be problematic because the line forms in different places at different times of the day. This item taken under advisement for now.

STATUS OF BAYLINK LOG

- At this time Baylink does not have staff time available to assemble and publish the quarterly newsletter. We are looking at resuming this practice starting this summer. In the meantime Baylink will periodically publish “one-subject” newsletter items that capture some timely topic.

M/V VALLEJO

- The vessel is slated to go back to Nichols Brothers for aluminum replacement in September 2005. A chartered back-up vessel will be available to the City during the four months that VALLEJO is at the shipyard. The cover vessel will

be brought to Vallejo for crew training and familiarization before the VALLEJO is allowed to depart.

ADVERTISING ON VESSELS

- As a pilot program, Lennar Mare Island will be advertising their residential developments on Mare Island on the ferries starting in April 2005. In the mean time the City will be issuing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for a five year advertising contract. Advertisement will be limited to ferry interiors and some space inside the Vallejo Ferry Terminal.
- The preference is to attract "big business" to buy the entire interior of the ferry boats; and for longer term versus short term commitments. There will also be an effort to cultivate local and regional businesses. We will also be looking to minimize the turnover rate so as not to have continually changing advertising media.
- Goal is to maximize net revenue to the City while keeping the aesthetic impact as benign as possible.

FERRY BOARDING ISSUES

- Security improvements at the Vallejo Ferry Terminal will be underway in late March based on the Vallejo City Council approving the contract with CAL, Inc. to perform the work.
- Work will be accomplished on a "not-to-interfere" basis with ferry operations. There might be a period of time when there is only one functional gate on the gangway.
- New gates will be motorized grille type gates, actuated by a deckhand swiping a valid access card. This should quicken the process of gate opening and closing, and preclude unauthorized access.
- New gates will meet all fire and safety codes; including manual operation in the event of a power outage.
- CARs will remain on duty during the afternoon commute period at the Ferry Building until further notice. Some of the early training and consistency issues appear to resolving themselves.
- Baylink will be working with the Port of San Francisco and the WTA to improve signage at the Ferry Building; this might be a long process.
- The question came up regarding crew jurisdiction. To put it simply, the crew has legal jurisdiction once a passenger steps onboard the ferry. Otherwise and in public spaces, local law enforcement (either Vallejo PD or San Francisco PD) has jurisdiction.

III. New Business

UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

- It has been brought to Baylink's attention that unaccompanied minors (children less than 13 years old) have been occasionally riding the ferries. Up until now there has been no official policy on this. Given the length of the ferry trip and other considerations, Baylink has determined that we wish to no longer allow unaccompanied minors to travel on the ferries, and that children less than 13 years of age must be accompanied by a fare paying adult. These children will also then qualify for a reduced fare or free travel in accordance

with the approved fare schedule. In this regard, Baylink will research the industry's handling of this issue, and consult with the FTA, as well as adding it to the agenda of our meeting in April with the Passenger Vessel Association leadership in Baltimore. Until more feedback is received, Baylink will proceed to implement the procedure on an unofficial basis.

LOGOS

- The old Baylink logo is being abandoned and removed from all vessels, the website, and all printed materials. In the interim the word "Baylink," in our blue color, will represent the ferry service. The City is currently considering all options for some future logo to clearly distinguish and identify the Baylink ferry service.

TICKET SALES IN VALLEJO

- It was pointed out that ticket sellers in Vallejo are not always selling the most cost effective tickets to some patrons. This problem is perhaps most pronounced with groups of mixed age riders (for example, seniors traveling with adults and/or children). The DayPass is the least cost option for the adult desiring round trip travel, but the discounted one-way tickets for seniors, the disabled, and children between 5-13 is less expensive than the DayPass. Baylink will develop a poster for the ticket office that more clearly explains the cost benefits with the discounted one-way tickets. Baylink will also train the ticket sellers to be sure to offer the least cost travel option to all riders.
- Discussion was held about cutting off ticket sales five minutes before each ferry sailing. This has always been a challenge, not so much for the regular riders and commuters, but for those who do not ride the ferry regularly. In order for the ferry to depart on time, we have to actively manage the ticket selling process where it relates to getting the ferries underway at the scheduled time.

SPARE THE AIR DAYS

- Baylink will participate to some degree pending consultation with the STA. There are five Spare the Air days planned for this year, and it is likely that Baylink will participate in some, but probably not all.
- There will be no loss of revenue. Baylink, like all other participants, would be able to claim compensation for lost fares from MTC.
- Last year most transit providers saw a 10% spike in ridership, we will probably have that capacity available on the boats.

EXTERIOR PAINT FOR INTINTOLI & MARE ISLAND

- The rather ragged appearance on these two boats continues to be very noticeable and is drawing some attention. Structurally, the vessel superstructures are not at risk. It is an aesthetic problem, a cosmetic issue, and not a corrosion problem at this point.
- Repainting the superstructures of both boats is certainly on the list of maintenance items, but other maintenance items have priority for the time being. First and foremost, we want to get the interiors on the MARE ISLAND done during the coming fiscal year.

- Depending on how some other fiscal issues play out, we may undertake at least some spot painting of the worst areas on each boat.

SBC PARK & GIANTS GAME SERVICE

- Baylink is expanding service to all night games this year, 46 in all.
- For the first two years the limited Friday and Saturday night pickups did a little better than break even.
- Policies and procedures will be the same this year, except that the departure from SBC park will not be any earlier than 10:00pm.

LATE NIGHT FERRY SERVICE

- Some have expressed a feeling that the late night bus service should be replaced with a late night ferry run, to accommodate people staying late to attend various functions in San Francisco.
- Baylink understands the relative safety issues of late night ferry service versus late night bus service.
- Given limited financial resources, and the relative cost differentials for running a ferry and a bus, Baylink's position is that until we see some regular demand on the late night bus, a late ferry run would not make sense from a financial perspective.
- We recognize that this service is desired, and we will continue to monitor and evaluate the potential.

FARE ADJUSTMENTS

- New fares will be effective April 4th for everything except the monthly passes. Monthly passes will go on sale for April at the new rates pending a public hearing and City Council approval of the fare schedule at their regular meeting on March 22nd.
- Previously purchased DayPasses and Ten-Ride Books will remain valid.
- Feedback on the new fare schedule has been minimal. Some expressing concern with the \$2 hike in the DayPasses, while others had concern with the MUNI sticker issue. Some feedback indicated that the \$15 MUNI sticker cost was too high, while others thought it was too low.
- In all there have been 27 comments received on the fare increases, representing about 3% of the regular ridership.

NEW THREE BOAT SCHEDULE STARTING APRIL 4TH

- Baylink Staff shared the feedback statistics with the Committee; these statistics will be published to the ridership at large.
- To date we are not seeing a clear mandate to alter the schedule as proposed.
- Schedule was primarily based on the results obtained last fall from the surveys. Secondly, the schedule was constructed to afford maximum flexibility for all ferry patrons, and to improve on-time performance and reliability.
- The new schedule was anchored around the 8:00am San Francisco arrival time, and the 5:15pm San Francisco departure time.
- We are running buses primarily to supplement ferry trips. It will give the commuter some options should they be running a little late, or need to get to work or home a little bit earlier. The key is providing a more forgiving

schedule and reducing everyone's stress factor with a safety net of buses on both sides of the commute ferry trips.

- Access to and from Pier 41 was maintained at its current level. Pier 41 passenger numbers are relatively flat, while other segments of the route are up this year by about 8%.
- There will be an analysis period following implementation of the new schedule. If we identify a clear need to adjust the schedule, Baylink will take the appropriate action
- The parking lot situation will be monitored closely as ridership numbers rise through the spring and summer. The City's Parking Engineer has identified areas that could be turned over to additional ferry parking should the need arise.

IV. Future Issues & Closing

- Wi-Fi internet access on the route.
- Ticketing systems.
- Marketing plans.
- Next VFAC Meeting will be scheduled for May, 2005.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm.

Minutes Approved and Submitted:



Martin J. Robbins



Patricia A. Mathews