



Vallejo Ferry Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

July 29, 2004, 6:30 pm
Vallejo City Hall – 4th Floor Conference Room

I. Attendees & Preliminaries

Chip Coundjeris, representing the 6:30am ferry riders
Wayne Shepard, representing the 8:00am ferry riders
Pat Mathews, representing the 6:00am ferry riders (Ridership Chair)
Teri Booth Koster, representing the 8:00am ferry riders
Dale Knight, representing the 8:00am ferry riders
Victoria Generao, representing the 6/8:00am ferry riders
Kevin Donnelly, Blue & Gold Fleet - Baylink Administration
Marty Robbins, Baylink General Manager (Acting Committee Chair)

- Meeting called to order at 6:50pm
- Introductions

II. Old Business

SNACK BAR

- There is a continuing concern with a lack of healthy menu choices as currently offered by San Francisco Bay Concessionaires (SFBC).
- It was pointed out that deliveries to the vessels are sometimes going unfilled resulting in the unavailability of certain items.
- Bottled water currently sells for \$2.00 which is more expensive than small fountain soft drinks. It was brought up that SFBC should offer cups, water, and ice at some nominal charge (perhaps 15¢ or so) as an alternative.
- The Committee asked that SFBC look again at offering made fresh items such as breakfast and deli sandwiches, salads, et cetera.
- Menu should be more specific regarding actual cup sizes.
- Baylink will refer all items listed above to SFBC for action.

NEW SEATING FOR INTINTOLI

- The new seating, tables, and flooring are scheduled for installation in September, 2004. The vessel will be offline for up to 4 weeks to accomplish this work.

M/V VALLEJO

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

COMMUNICATIONS

- Baylink has made multiple requests to the Port of San Francisco to install a variable message sign. To date the Port has not responded.

FERRY BOARDING ISSUES

- Hydraulic leak at the aft boarding ramp at the Ferry Building has not been fixed yet despite multiple notifications to the Port.
- All transfer span modifications at the Ferry Building have been completed. Two ramp loading and unloading is now available at all locations except Pier 41.
- Some days the second ramp is not being used on the 8:00am Vallejo departure; Baylink will reinforce this to the respective Captains.

QUEUING AT THE FERRY BUILDING, SEAT SAVING, PAN HANDLING

- Line problems persist at the Ferry Building. This problem has become more acute with the summer crowds and influx of one-time or occasional ferry riders. Baylink will have Captains make announcements on days with heavy tourist and leisure traffic regarding policies for line cutting and saving of seats.
- Baylink will have Todd Martini send out an e-mail to the ridership to once again remind people of the queuing, boarding, and seating policies.
- Regarding aggressive pan handling activities at the Ferry Building and onboard the vessels - Baylink was provided with the name and telephone number of the Building Manager so that we can report these problems as they occur. For any pan handling problems onboard the ferries, passengers should refer the matter to a deck hand for resolution.

TRANSLINK TICKETING

- Implementation is now slated for 2006 for Vallejo Baylink and Vallejo Transit. Translink is being completed on AC Transit and Golden Gate in 2004. In 2005 they will implement on Muni, Bart, and Caltrain. As more information becomes available, Baylink will pass it on.

FERRY SCHEDULES

- An upcoming passenger survey will gauge the level of interest in tweaking the morning commute times under the existing two boat schedule.
- Additionally, the same survey will gather information regarding preferred San Francisco arrival times for a three boat schedule that we may be able to implement in April 2005.

USCG VESSEL & PORT SECURITY ISSUES

- There are reports that some passengers have been getting on or off the vessels after the ramps are raised.
- There are reports that some sailings have returned to the dock to allow a passenger to disembark.
- There are reports that some passengers have aggressively boarded the vessel after being told that 300 passengers had already boarded.
- Baylink considers all of these incidents to be against standard operational policy. Additionally, these actions represent a security problem. Crews will be trained regarding actions such as these. There will be a specific requirement for the Captain to personally approve the disembarkation of any passenger once that passenger has boarded the ferry.
- It was recommended that the next issue of the Baylink Log outline some common security procedures that passengers and crew members can take to improve the overall security of the ferry service.
- New security measures are now in effect at the Ferry Building as mandated by the USCG. In Vallejo we will continue to utilize both gates, with the exterior gates left open during weekday morning commute periods only.

GIANTS NIGHT GAME SERVICE

- Ridership for the service this year is meeting expectation. In addition to the Friday night service we are also serving all Saturday night games.
- Baylink will continue to market the service as budgets allow.

VFAC SUGGESTION BOX

- A box will be procured and installed in the Vallejo Ferry Terminal near the ticket office. The keys for the box will be turned over to the VFAC.

VALLEJO TRANSIT – BUS SCHEDULE ADHERENCE

- Reports continue to be received regarding Vallejo Transit (VT) bus performance in terms of schedule adherence. Baylink requested that specific information be provided (date/time/route) so that the VT Operations Manager can take specific action with the driver involved.

III. New Business

TICKET PROCEDURES

- Recently both Muggs and Bay Crossings have run out of daypasses. Baylink has encouraged all vendors to keep adequate ticket inventories on hand. In the event that daypasses are unavailable, Baylink policy is that passengers who are forced to buy one way tickets will be refunded the \$4.00 difference if both one way tickets are taken to the ticket office.
- It was pointed out that we need better variation in the monthly passes. Too often one month's pass can be used for the next month because they look so much alike.

TERMINAL PARKING LOT

- Parking is in a state of flux with completion of the Georgia Street extension and construction of the State Farm building. New spaces for ferry parking have been designated by signage near City Hall parking areas. We will include this information on the next Baylink Log and have Todd send out an e-mail reminder.
- Regarding vandalism and security in the lot, there has been a decrease in the number of incidents reported to Baylink. Wayne has acquired some data from the Vallejo Police Department and is analyzing that information.

FERRY SCHEDULE PERFORMANCE

- There has been some volume of passenger complaints lately regarding schedule performance.
- Data analysis indicates that there are days when schedule performance does suffer, especially on the 8:00am Vallejo departure. Overall however, the sailing data indicates that the service as a whole meets the public transit goal of 5 minute schedule variance.
- The VFAC recommended reminding people that schedules and sailing times are approximate. We will add this wording to all future schedules and ticket instruments wherever possible.

SAN FRANCISCO SIGNAGE IS INCORRECT REGARDING BUS RUNS

- It was pointed out that the summer schedule posted by the Port has an error concerning the 5:00pm weekday bus. We will contact the Port and get this corrected.

SMOKING ON THE FERRIES BY CREWS AND SNACK BAR EMPLOYEES

- Names were taken and those individuals will be reminded of the no smoking policies.

FUEL CONSERVATION MEASURES

- Since the inception of fuel conservation measures on non-commute runs in April we have seen a 3% decrease in fuel consumption. This level of fuel savings is on target and will result in about \$45,000 in annual fuel cost savings.

BAYLINK'S INTENT REGARDING THE VFAC

- Baylink has no direction to provide to the VFAC on the issue of committee makeup or term length. The committee belongs to the passenger community and should only be accountable to that group. The City only asks that the committee continue to work under its own set of bylaws in an open and consistent matter. To date the committee and its members have been vital to our efforts at providing the best public transit ferry service that we can.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY

- Vallejo Baylink is committed to providing barrier free access to our service. Although the ADA laws do not cover ferry boats in their specific rules, we have always striven towards providing completely accessible vessels and facilities.
- Given that wheelchairs have evolved over time to larger and more complex vehicles to better serve the needs of the mobility impaired, the challenge continues. The larger boats seem to have plenty of space available for the largest of the new wheelchair vehicles. Room for this accommodation on the VALLEJO remains a challenge. Baylink requests that passengers assist us in notifying crew members if you see or witness a passenger having difficulty with an accessibility issue. As always, our deckhands will strive to accommodate the needs of all in this area.

MARKETING IDEAS

- Baylink will look into some of the following marketing ideas: customized lanyards and passholders; accurate ferry information for real estate developers; coordination with Vallejo Chamber of Commerce and Visitor's Bureau; use of the Fairgrounds variable message sign; sale of Baylink souvenirs.

IV. Future Issues & Closing

- Ridership survey due out in mid-August 2004. VFAC helped refine the survey questions and pledged support for gathering this vital information.
- Baylink Log to be published in August 2004 addressing many issues cited above.
- Next VFAC Meeting will be scheduled for late October or early November 2004.
- Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.

Minutes Approved and Submitted:



Martin J. Robbins



Patricia A. Mathews