**Ferry Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

Thursday May 19th

**Roll Call** – *Islands*: Sonny Sprague/Swan’s Island, Kathy Clark, Swan’s Island, Jon Emerson/North Haven, John King/Islesboro, Eva Murray/Matinicus, Duncan Bond/Frenchboro.

*Mainland*: Dennis Damon, Hank Berg.

*MDOT*: Bruce Van Note, Mark Higgins, Bill Pulver, Dave Bernhardt, Dan McNichol, Mike Mckenna, Karen Doyle, Joel Perry.

**Visitors –** Lisa Millete, Nick Batista, and Jeff Frank of the Island Institute.

Rick Lattimer Town Administrator of North Haven

**Minutes Approval –** Eva Murray 1st, Dennis Damon 2nd.

Dennis Damon also mentioned the March minutes need to change the date of the May meeting to the 19th.

**Communications –**

*To or by the MSFS/MDOT -* Commissioner Bruce Van Note took a few minutes to speak on some issues relating to the FAB. He spoke on the disruption of services due to various issues and made special point to discuss that the ABs were now being hired at step 8 to try to help alleviate staffing issues. He also reiterated that Ferry Service disruptions are happening all over the country. It was also discussed that the DOT has moved forward with the naming of the new vessel as the Almer Dinsmore. He then spoke on the issues of labor and diesel fuel rates, and that he hoped to be able to stay with the commitment of not changing the fair rates for 4 years. Lastly, he discussed that the Ferry Service Legislative review has been on the back burned due to multiple issues, and it will be moved forward. Karen Doyle also spoke in response to a question that Phil Crossman had brought up about how funds are appropriated to the MSFS for staffing. She discussed that Maine State Law is the determining factor in why positions are created/reduced and how there pay scales are created. Also letting the board know that it is a long and specific process to create and pay positions, and that occasionally positions are frozen or eliminated depending on budgetary concerns.

*To or by the Board –* Dennis Damon spoke on the possible solution of the Coast Guard helping with the staffing issues at the ferry service. It was determined that was not an option. He also discussed how important the ferries are to the island economies and how disruptions in service can be devastating. Sonny Sprague then wanted to know about possible planning for future ramp breakdowns. Jon Emerson then discussed the possibility of Facebook being more effectively used by the terminal managers to get out critical information. It was also discussed that sometimes 511 didn’t get all the info out but was a good way to get people to call the terminals. Dave Bernhardt and Mark Higgins then spoke on the chain of command and how the information gets disseminated through the chain of command. Eva Murray then praised Dan McNichol for how well he gets info out to her on Matinicus and spoke about how the Rockland terminal employees were always very helpful. She also brought up that some people didn’t realize then when trips get cancelled, they must also cancel their returning trip as well.

*Island Institute –* Lisa Millette gave the board an update on the KPFF survey that they hope to get out to the public shortly. Making special mention that the KPFF consultants will be available on Wednesday the 25th via a zoom meeting to discuss it and to visit the Island Institute website to attend. They are hoping for a fall or end of year delivery for the survey results.

**Reports of the Ferry Service –**

*Vessel Status Report –* See attachment. Mark Higgins then spoke about the Spear COI scheduled for 5/20. He also discussed how the bids for new boats are in a scoring system to be awarded. Jon King then asked why the M.C. Smith is going in for repair and Mark said it was a required haul out for a full hull inspection.

*Staffing Report –* See attachment. Mark Higgins then discussed the ongoing effort to combine current PT and intermittent positions to create full time jobs. Referencing that these two positions weren’t working well due to staff availability.

*Financial Report –* See attachment. Mike McKenna noted that the fair box, parking, and State contributions were all up, but total revenue was down. Some determining factors in this are that diesel fuel and OT are both up, with diesel being considerably up. Jon King then asked what the special pay was, and Karen Doyle explained that that it was the stiped pay for the Ferry Service.

**Island Specific Issues –**

Karen Doyle asked about the status of the Swan’s Island ramp, and the Bass Harbor ramp. Dave Bernhardt let her know that they were both working and the reason it took some time was that the work on the ramps had to be contracted out. Also saying that the work completed there will also be completed on the other island ramps as well to try to prevent any further interruptions. Mark Higgins also let the board know that Prock Marine was going to begin working in Region 4 (Bass Harbor, Swan’s Island) to do preventive maintenance on the ramps, and that they already work in Region 2.

**New Business –**

Dave Bernhardt let everyone know that the bid meeting had taken place for the Libby replacement and that everyone needed to start thinking about another name for the boat. Eva Murray suggested the George Mitchell. Joel Perry spoke about the new ticketing system implementation that is scheduled to take place on June 6th for rollout on June 7th.

**Next Meeting –**

Scheduled for June 14th @ 10:30am.

**Adjournment –**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:22pm.