**Ferry Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

Thursday March 17th

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

*Mainland*: Dennis Damon, Hank Berg.

*MDOT*: Dave Bernhardt, Mark Higgins, Joel Perry, Mike McKenna.

**Visitors** - Lisa Millete and Jeff Frank, both with the Island Institute

**Minutes Approval** - Sonny Sprague 1st, Dennis Damon 2nd.

**Communications** -

*To or by the MSFS/MDOT*- Dave Bernhardt took a few minutes to speak on the recent issues with the Swans transfer bridge, and the scheduling issues for North Haven island. He wants to get feedback from the FAB on how we all, FAB, Town Officials, and the MSFS can better communicate issues to the people of the islands when these scenarios crop up. The MSFS has text alerts for those who have signed up, connects with town officials and FAB members to let them know of the issue as well as gives them information to put on the town Facebook page. Even with that, Islanders are complaining of lack of communication and not being kept up to date. There was good discussion, we at the MSFS will continue to communicate as we have with updates to the issue as soon as we can. Hank Berg mentioned how well a dedicated text line worked for Casco Bay. Mark Higgins then discussed the work that will be done on the Swans transfer bridge by Johnson & Jordan when the ordered parts arrive. Mentioning that the work should take no more than 1 to 2 days.

*Financial Subcommittee-* John King discussed the report by the subcommittee and brought up some of the staffing and salary issues that were facing the MSFS. Mark Higgins and Dave Bernhardt then spoke on the rate of pay changes and the long process to accomplish that.

*Island Institute Ferry Study-* Lisa Millette spoke on the Island Institutes recent contract with the KPFF. They have already started data collection and hope to have reports available before the end of the year.

**Reports of the Ferry Service –**

*Vessel Status Report-* See attachment.

*Staffing Report-* See attachment.

*Financial Reports-* See attachment. Mike McKenna said that the fair box, and parking were up. State funds show as down, and total revenue shows as down, but due to timing is even. The maintenance line item shows a reduction, but that is based on timing with a partial bill for the LEE and the final bill in April.

**Island Specific Issues –**

Sonny Sprague discussed the possibility of moving the propane truck off the already reduced Wednesday delivery. Dennis Damon asked about what is happening with people who are ignoring the cabin masking rules onboard the vessels. Mark Higgins said that the AB’s are asking people to please mask up when making their safety rounds and it was suggested that passengers as well speak up. Phil Crossman commented on how polite, considerate, and helpful the new staff at the Vinalhaven Terminal have been.

**New Business –**

*Island Meetings-* Dave Bernhardt and Mark Higgins spoke about there continued effort to get out to all of the islands on a more consistent basis to harbor better communications. They have both recently been out to North Haven, Islesboro, Vinalhaven, and Swan’s Island, and are planning trips to Frenchboro and Matinicus this spring.

*Islesboro Service Letter-* See attachment.

**Old Business –**

*Update on the Legislative request for a MSFS Budget review-* See attachment. Dave Bernhardt spoke on the letter from Commissioner Bruce Van Note which mentions LD 43 and LD 234. Eva Murray asked about the possibility of reaching back out to discuss changes to the statutes to Frenchboro and Mainticus to allow for more trips.

*Hybrid Ferry Naming-*Dennis Damon motioned to name to new ferry after Almer (Al) Dinsmore. Kathy Clark seconded the motion. I vote was held, and a unanimous decision was in favor.

**Next Meeting –**

The next meeting will be held May 19th at 10:30am. Mark Higgins hopes to be able to hold a hybrid meeting in the Rockland conference room with attendees having the option to attend via Zoom if they can’t attend in person.

**Adjournment –**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45pm