



City of Gustavus

P.O. Box 1

Gustavus, AK 99826

Phone: (907) 697-2451

January 19, 2023

Captain Anthony (Tony) Karvelas
Acting General Manager Alaska Marine Highway
Alaska Marine Highway System
7037 North Tongass Highway
Ketchikan, Alaska 99901-9101
Via Email: RESTORE@PublicInput.com

Dear Captain Karvelas:

Subject: City of Gustavus comments regarding summer 2023 ferry schedule
Reference: Your letter of January 12, 2023, with draft schedule

The City of Gustavus is pleased to offer supportive comments for the published draft ferry schedule to serve Gustavus for summer 2023. Gustavus is an active and steadily growing community with a strong summer visitor industry. The ferry is a vital channel for our visitors. We are also a major customer for freight service via ferry. Ferry service enables and is vital to our economy and lifestyles. We are most grateful for the service we enjoy.

Specifically, we appreciate the scheduling of two trips weekly through the Summer 2023. While we would appreciate non-stop service, we understand the need for the system to apply its resources efficiently in serving communities in our region. We would add, though, the following comments:

1. Many Gustavus residents use the Juneau-bound ferry year-round to connect to flights north or south from Juneau, but with stops in Hoonah both ways, the ship arrives in Auke Bay too late to make Alaska Airlines flights out of Juneau. If the ferry could shift its schedule slightly to arrive earlier those connections would be more workable for travelers out of Gustavus.

2. We would like to put in a plug for service to our neighboring community of Pelican, which doesn't appear in the draft schedule. We know AMHS service is important to them and hope you can meet their needs as well. If AMHS is able to crew the M/V

Hubbard, thereby freeing schedule space for the LeConte, we suggest adding a Saturday cruise to Pelican with a stop in Gustavus both ways. Many Gustavus residents and visitors have enjoyed past opportunities to travel by ferry to Pelican for the day. It's a lovely cruise. The Pelican trips have been attractive to Juneau residents and visitors as well. Saturday service would enhance regional tourism opportunities benefiting all three communities. Tourists could enjoy visits to all three communities, extending their stays in our region. Furthermore, the limited freight and vehicle space to Gustavus and Hoonah would be enhanced by a third voyage weekly through Gustavus to Pelican. An additional weekly run would increase freight, vehicle, and passenger revenue to the AMHS as it improves opportunities for all of us living in Gustavus and Pelican. I hope you will try to make it possible.

3. Finally, at City Hall we hear complaints about the add-on port charge for calls here. The folks assume that the City of Gustavus adds that charge, so we must explain that AMHS applies it. I understand that most other communities don't have an added port charge. Is the extra charge truly necessary?

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Summer 2023 schedule. The City of Gustavus appreciates its ferry service and if there is anything we can do from our end to insure its continued success, please let us know.

With kind regards,

Mike Taylor

Mike Taylor
Mayor, City of Gustavus