

## NCUC Approves Hybrid Ferry Schedule

### *Joint Statement of Bald Head Island Transportation and the Village of Bald Head*

On Friday, October 25, 2024, the NC Utilities Commission issued an [Order Approving Stipulation and Allowing Revisions to Ferry Schedule](#). This order is in response to the [settlement](#) that was reached between the Island intervenors (the Village, Bald Head Island Club, Bald Head Association, Bald Head Academy) and Bald Head Island Transportation, Inc. (BHIT). The NCUC order approved the agreement and [stipulation](#) of settlement in its entirety which included the following in addition to the hybrid schedule:

- Establishment of a one-year “trial period” after which BHIT has committed to making additional changes should the hybrid schedule result in significant capacity issues.
- Establishment of a bi-annual performance review between parties.
- Elimination of the existing mid-day lunch break.
- Development of a reservation system for employees and contractors on the contractor ferry (which is expected to roll out by January 31, 2025).

The hybrid schedule includes both the 30-minute one-way (60-minute roundtrip) runs during the peak morning hours, reducing to 45-minute one-way (1.5-hour roundtrip) runs through the middle of the day and returning to a 30-minute one-way (60-minute roundtrip) runs in the evening. In addition, there are some changes on the weekend runs. The original application to the NCUC included the 45-minute runs through the entire day.

BHIT is working towards a December 1, 2024, implementation date, has begun working with the developer to make the necessary software changes, and is preparing the plan to communicate the proposed schedules as soon as possible and in compliance with the NCUC order.

“BHI Transportation understands the importance of on-time performance and has worked with Island organizations to develop a revised ferry schedule to significantly improve on this important metric. We are committed to making this transition as smooth as possible,” said Chad Paul, CEO of BHIT and BHIL.

Mayor Peter Quinn stated, “On behalf of the intervenors in this proceeding, we are pleased with the Commission’s order. We want to reiterate our appreciation to BHIT for their willingness to work with us on a solution that works better for system users than the original proposal. We recognize that change can be hard, especially when Bald Head Island has been used to a ferry schedule that has existed for some time. That said, the new schedule will improve the ability of BHIT to have ferries departing and arriving on time. Along with increased usage of the reservation system, these combined actions by BHIT will improve certainty around travel planning. We want to encourage patience by all as BHIT works to implement the revised schedule.”