



## News

# FERRY OFFERS RENDEZVOUS WITH TALL SHIPS

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By **BRIDGET TURCOTTE**

**LYNN** — The ferry's first week of service resumes Tuesday, coinciding with Sail Boston 2017, a five-day stop for the **Rendez-Vous 2017 Tall Ships Regatta**.

“The timing couldn’t be better,” said **State Sen. Thomas M. McGee**. “It’s an opportunity for people to take the ferry into Boston and get the chance to see the ships.”

The commuter ferry service will be restored with one morning and one evening trip. The state is providing a Highway Division Grant of up to \$200,000 to operate the ferry throughout the summer.

Riders can take the 35-minute excursion from the Blossom Street extension dock to Boston’s Long Wharf for \$7. Seniors and children can ride for half price.

Commuters can board the boat in Lynn at 7:45 a.m. and arrive in Boston by 8:20 a.m. The ferry will depart from Boston at 6 p.m. and arrive in Lynn at 6:35 p.m.

“Based on the two years that we had the ferry service up and running, we expect there to be a crowd,” said **EDIC/ Lynn Executive Director James M. Cowdell**. “With so many cars on the road, people are looking for an alternative. This is an alternative.”

The city participated in a two-year demonstration project 2014 and 2015 to launch the ferry on the state’s dime. The Blossom Street extension pier and two years of ferry operating expenses were funded by the Seaport Economic Council, which provided \$8.5 million under former Gov. Deval Patrick.

More than 13,300 people rode the ferry in 2014 when it was first introduced to the city. That number grew to more than 14,500 the next year. If the service had continued into 2016, McGee said ridership would have followed the same trend.

But last June, Gov. Charlie Baker threw the idea of a permanent ferry service overboard. Baker concluded it didn’t generate the ridership to be sustainable and that tickets were too expensive. When the service was discontinued, the city received a petition to bring back the ferry with hundreds of signatures. About 80 percent of the people who rode the ferry in 2014 and 2015 were from communities other than Lynn, said McGee.

“This isn’t just Lynn saying ‘we should have a ferry,’” said McGee. “This is Lynn playing into a real need.”

McGee added that he expects water transportation to be a continuously growing trend. The city is expected to purchase its own boat in two to three years with a \$4.5 million federal grant. Once the new ferry is in service, the schedule will be more flexible and there will be more opportunity to use the ferry for recreational use, he said.

This year, the city will lease the same boat from Boston Harbor Cruises that it used during the trial period. The ferry seats about 150 people.

In comparison, Salem’s ferry service seats about the same amount of people but takes approximately 50 minutes to travel from Salem to Boston, McGee said.

The first 50 riders on Tuesday will each receive a Dunkin’ Donuts gift card and a copy of *The Item*.

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