



NEWS

FERRY WILL FLOAT AGAIN THIS SUMMER

ITEM FILE PHOTO

Limited ferry service to and from Boston is returning.

BY THOMAS GRILLO

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LYNN — All aboard.

After rejecting ferry service for more than a year, **Gov. Charlie Baker** has reversed course and will fund a weekday excursion from the city's terminal to **Boston's Long Wharf**.

The boat is expected to launch on Tuesday, June 20, and run until Friday, Sept. 22. It will consist of one departure from the **Blossom Street Extension** at 7:45 a.m., arriving in Long Wharf at 8:20 a.m., and one evening return from Boston at 6 p.m., arriving in Lynn at 6:35 p.m.

The cost for the 35-minute trip is \$7 each way, \$3.50 for children and seniors.

“We are pleased to provide the needed additional resources for Lynn to once again offer this seasonal ferry service, which will give residents and visitors yet another transportation option,” said **State Transportation Secretary Stephanie Pollack**, in a statement.

This represents a change in direction for the Baker administration and the **Massachusetts Department of Transportation** (MassDOT).

Last summer, the governor said Lynn’s two-year demonstration project in 2014 and 2015 to launch the ferry on the state’s dime was an opportunity to examine whether the service made economic sense. He concluded it didn’t generate the ridership and the price tag per rider was too expensive.

On Thursday, a spokeswoman for Pollack said the state is providing a Highway Division grant of up to \$200,000 for ferry service this summer to mitigate the impact of Route 1A and Sumner Tunnel construction projects.

“We don’t expect the city will need all of the \$200,000 since the ferry generates fares,” said **Jacquelyn Goddard**.

During the 2014 season, the estimated total number of rides was 13,322 and during the 2015 season, the estimated number of rides taken totaled 14,577.

But in 2016 the Baker administration halted service and blamed the city for failure to come up with the \$700,000 in operating expenses needed to operate the ferry.

That disagreement appears to be over for now.

State Sen. Thomas McGee (D-Lynn), who has been a champion of the ferry and criticized Baker for failing to fund it last summer, praised Pollack for her leadership.

“Residents of Lynn and the North Shore will certainly benefit from an affordable and stress-free commute this summer,” McGee said in a statement. “This significant momentum is not just beneficial for the continuation of service in Lynn this summer, but for advancing the long-term vision of water transportation, with Lynn as a key component, in the entire **Massachusetts Bay**.”

James Cowdell, executive director of the **Economic Development and Industrial Corp.**, the city’s development bank said he’s excited that the ferry is back.

“The two year pilot program proved that there is a demand on the North Shore for a commuter ferry out of Lynn,” he said in a statement.

Last spring, in an effort led by **U.S. Rep. Seth Moulton** (D-Mass.) and in partnership with state and local leaders, the **Federal Transit Administration** awarded a \$4.5 million dollar grant for Lynn to purchase a vessel to support ferry service.

“The ferry will provide access to higher-paying jobs, housing, and opportunity for Lynn,” Moulton said in a statement. Additionally, MassDOT provided technical assistance resources last winter for the city to develop a long term sustainability plan for ferry operations, and is currently assisting with the purchase of the boat.

Mayor Judith Flanagan Kennedy could not be reached for comment.

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