

BEAVER ISLAND AWARDED GRANT DOLLARS

To

PUT TOWARD A NEW VESSEL

January 27, 2023 - A new boat is looking promising for Beaver Island. A vessel was designed in 2012 and until recently was not able to be funded. A grant from the Federal Transportation Administration (FTA) for 6,628,285 million was recently awarded and a Michigan Infrastructure Grant of \$14,000,000. The Michigan Department of Transportation is also funding the Beaver Island Transportation Authority (BITA) \$90,0000 to conduct a study to determine what type of propulsion system besides diesel could be utilized. This study will take place over the next year. Once completed, an estimate of the cost of a new vessel and yearly upkeep can be determined. The configuration of the dock will also be evaluated.

There are currently two vessels transporting passengers, vehicles, and freight, from Charlevoix to Beaver Island between April and December. The M/V Emerald Isle launched in 1997 is owned by BITA and operated by the Beaver Island Boat Company (BIBCO). BIBCO owns and operates the M/V Beaver Islander built in 1962 and runs during peak season and when the M/V Emerald Isle is out of service. The ferry service is essential for the community and economy.

BITA was formed in 1993 pursuant of Public Act 196 to form a transit system in the greater Beaver Island area. BITA has a contract with BIBCO to provide scheduled transportation to the Island from Charlevoix. Water transportation would not be possible without the support of BIBCO, Michigan and Federal officials, MDOT, and FTA. BITA receives federal and state funding for capital and operations. Questions can be directed to Mary Cook, Executive Director, Beaver Island Transportation Authority, 231/448/3049.