

Meeting Minutes of BBCMUG and Parks Board representatives, March 19, 2013

In attendance for BBCMUG:

- JC d'Almeida
- Ken Christie
- Grant Phillips
- Sean Smith
- Mark Crosby
- Peter Vandergugten

From Vancouver Parks Board:

- Peter Kuran (left after first hour)
- Gordon Barber
- Ken Maguire

PB staff brought several documents with them, including:

- Summary of BBCM Updates (completed, in progress, and proposed)
- Phased Refurbishment Program of Floats (Draft)
- A copy of the latest e-mail newsletter
- A copy of the BBCM Customer Survey, issued Oct 2 2012, closed Oct 21, 2012.

KM gave a synopsis of items in the BBCM Updates document, including:

- **Spill kits** installed near entrances of both sides of the marina.
- **Members washroom facilities** will be renovated late this year, after the boating season, to avoid loss of service in the high season. A proposed layout plan was shown, and indicates that the current structure will remain as-is, but one toilet stall on each side (mens and womens) will be removed and a shower stall added in their places. Due to the presence of asbestos insulation, the schedule has been affected. A call for tenders has been submitted.
- **Wifi** is being installed, starting with the west side. Signal strength to be evaluated before moving to installation on the larger east side. Shaw to be consulted on any possible abuse of the service and how to control this. Estimated completion time is end of May.
- **A marina condition report** has been conducted by the engineering firm of Worley Parsons. This report is to be used in addressing maintenance schedule for 2013-2015, and also assess the potential impact of the loss of protection from the former Coast Guard facility. It was mentioned by SS that the original marina was likely designed with the protection of the previous, larger and more protective CG pier in mind, and the design may now be inadequate for the current conditions.
- **Wait List** – is available for review, with names and contact info removed. It was suggested by JC that the wait list should conform to a format commonly used by other marinas, and also that there seems to be a large number of empty slips (75 counted), so the validity of the waiting list

is questioned. Also SS mentions reports from friends at the Rowing Club that they commonly have slips available for boats 30-35' and are advertising to their members to try and fill the slips, so there does not seem to be much of a wait list at VRC. This is at odds with the reported wait list of some 150 names on the BBCM list, and that the wait list has long been used as a premise for constantly elevating moorage rates. JC to supply "regular format" wait list to PB, PB to consider making wait list conform to this format.

It was also mentioned that if slips were available, especially during winter, that boaters (e.g., those who anchor off Kits Beach) who need a safe place for the winter might be offered some kind of "winter rate". This may prove to be a benefit to PB as the cost of removing boats which wash up on the beaches will be reduced. Currently the 30% sublease discourages boaters who cannot afford such rates. PB may give consideration to this idea.

- **Pump Out station** is installed. However it was also mentioned by a BBCMUG member that the pump-out station was not in service when the water was shut off for the winter.
- **Member's Survey** – is being used as a basis for addressing greatest concerns. An online Member's Survey is to be conducted twice a year now. JC asked if any consideration could be given to consulting BBCMUG on what questions should be asked, as it was pointed out that some important issues were not addressed in the survey, with the result that they are "off the radar", e.g. conducting an engineering survey. PB did not seem too open to the idea of consulting BBCMUG for input on the structure of the survey.
- **E-mail Newsletter** – will be issued in March and October. Software used to send the e-mails indicates about 55% of the e-mails have been opened. (PB staff had also indicated they had e-mail addresses for about 90% of the customers). It was agreed that more communication is a positive step.
- **Security** – PB has changed to Securiguard. Security staff are equipped with GPS units that track their movements to ensure they are carrying out patrols. Some BBCMUG members said they've met at least one of the new security guards and they seem to be helpful and pro-active in their duties. BBCMUG has asked for better communications to members regarding security issues, as there have been several break-ins and thefts at various marinas. Notices should be posted at the gates, not just up at the office. A security camera system is being considered, but may cost about \$60,000, with details of how to operate the system yet to be worked out. It was asked if members could know more about the schedule of patrols, when security staff are on site, etc., so as to be more aware of security provisions. GB will supply more details.
- **Electricity** – Major electrical upgrades will have to wait for the next Capital Plan. The current plan is just to maintain the system as-is, and repair as necessary. BBCMUG members mentioned they are aware that the voltage is often quite a bit less than the rated 110 volts, and it's easy to blow the breakers.
- **Bike Racks & Cage** – Bike racks have been installed in the parking lot, however it has been pointed out that these are useless without a secure bike cage. PV related his frustrations with having numerous bicycles stolen. JC suggested that by installing a high gate between the marina

office and the bulletin board, the entire area behind it (including members washroom and green space) is given a higher level of security which would satisfy the concept of a bike cage if racks were placed inside this area. PK to give this idea consideration.

- **Relocation of “Work Area” in Parking Lot** – a considerable amount of space is taken up by the PB staff work area where docks are refurbished. Consideration is being given to moving these operations to somewhere underneath Burrard Bridge.

Business from BBCMUG Agenda:

(note – some Agenda items were rendered superfluous by the presentation of new documents and reports by PB, others were passed over as being of minimal significance due to time limitations.)

- **Requested documents** – JC acknowledged that some documents requested were received, but more are outstanding, particularly budgets (actuals) for years 2005 thru 2012. GB said they will likely be able to forward these to us, but cautioned that “major expenses” are not shown in these budgets, as they are recorded in a separate “general” budget. SS requested that these be provided as well, as we need to have an idea how much revenues actually does go back into the marina.
- **Fire Contingency Plans** – Currently there is no formulated plan, but there are intentions to speak with the Fire Department and discuss items such as response times (especially in winter), the role of the fire boat, and evacuation plans. JC pointed out that most boaters have some kind of safety training whereby boaters will fight a fire with any tools at hand, and/or attempt to protect neighbouring property. This seems at odds with the concept suggested by PB that customers should simply evacuate and wait for the Fire Dep’t to arrive. SS also pointed out that most docks are essentially dead-ends, and it may prove impossible to evacuate along a dock if a large fire is burning in the way of the exit route. PB indicated they will be working on appropriate fire response plans.
- **Snag Forms** – This method of allowing customers to indicate any kind of problems to the office were agreed upon at a previous meeting, but no progress made as yet in implementing them. The design of the form, and where to post and collect them, have yet to be determined, but PB may accept BBCMUG assistance in designing a snag form.
- **Electrical Pricing Policy** – GB tried to explain that the difference in pricing between BBCM and Heather (\$28.18/mo at BBCM vs \$20.89/mo at HCM) is due to different management decision-making structures between the two marinas (HCM is operated by the City, and PB is merely contracted to run day-to-day operations). However, this argument does not hold water in the eyes of BBCMUG members and continues to defy logic. Additionally, the 2012 budget supplied by PB indicates expected hydro revenues of \$57,600, vs expected expenses of \$43,000, a built-in profit of \$14,600. There did not seem to be any explanation for this, but a conversation was started on looking into options to re-structure how electricity is charged, including the concept of spreading the cost among all users as a flat nominal fee. BBCMUG to continue to push for

equitable solutions on this subject, particularly in light of the fact that service standards are low, and not likely to improve much soon.

- **Year-round water** – JC raised the point that other marinas (VRC) offer year-round water without problems, so why can't BBCM? PK argued that it's "good preventative maintenance" to blow out the lines rather than risk damage due to frost. GP pointed out that many stratas (including his) leave their plastic gardening piping pressurized year-round, without any problems, and the number of freezing days is down to perhaps a week or so. It should not be a big problem for staff to turn off the water temporarily if a deep freeze is forecast. JC pointed out that if the drip valves were installed at the ends of docks, then this would also keep some small amount of water flow going and help prevent freezing problems. Plus these are cheap solutions and an easy policy to implement. PB seemed reluctant initially, but will consult with maintenance staff on the possibilities.

New Business:

- **Parking Passes** - KC brought up problem of assigning only one parking pass per boat. He represents two boating clubs, where many different people may take out the same boat at different times in the year, therefore the parking pass has to be either "portable", or he needs to request several dozen passes. Consideration being given to the idea of a pass on a mirror-hanger that can be portable between users. It was also mentioned that passes had been sold to non-members, particularly during the fireworks. PB seemed very surprised by this news, but determined to prevent future occurrence.
- **Ferry Access** – JC asked what prompted the "cease and desist" letter to the ferry companies telling them that they weren't allowed to pick up or drop off BBCM customers at the marina any more. PB said it was in response to a request from another BBCMUG member who said that this represents a security vulnerability. BBCMUG members contradicted this however, as the ferry operators have been very good at asking to see pass cards, and have provided this service for some thirty years, and are eager to recommence the service. By allowing the service, it supports local business, makes it easier to access the West End or Granville Island without the need for car travel or a long roundabout walk, and is considered a perk for BBCM customers. The pass cards do indeed resemble many other magnetic cards, and SS pointed out that perhaps an independent BBCM "membership card" would resolve this, but this was seen as an extra expense by PB staff. GP pointed out that not too many people are able to produce a magnetic pass card when requested anyways, so the chances of non-members gaining access are minimal. PB staff agreed they would look into re-instating access for the ferries.
- **Philosophy and/or Mission Statement** – JC asked if the PB has any current philosophy or mission statement regarding the purpose of the marina. GB replied that beyond the simple plan to continue to operate a marina, there isn't any. SS brought up the point that if the 2000 Lauga Report were to be followed word for word, then all owners of boats under 30' would be kicked out, and this is contrary to what BBCMUG believes the marina was founded for, under a principle of "boating for the common person". Some argument followed about whether such a

statement (in regard to the Woodward's) ever existed, but it was pointed out the Woodward's name is on the brass plaque, and is available for viewing. It was also stated that regardless of whether any historical statement exists, BBCMUG considers that the purpose of the marina should be "boating for the common person", and not "maximize profits" like other private operations may do – this is what separates BBCM from other marinas, and what should be its over-arching purpose. PB staff (GB in particular) seemed quite opposed to this concept. From the tone of PB comments, it is clear that they will continue to see BBCM as solely a "profit centre" and not much else. BBCMUG and PB continue to disagree on this point.

- **Native Land Claims** – it was raised by SS that BBCMUG is aware that the entire surrounding area was once an Indian Reservation, that the Squamish Band has come into possession of a parcel of land under Burrard Bridge (where the digital billboard sign is), and rumours abound that the Federal Government hurried to close the Kitsilano Coast Guard Base because of some impending land negotiations. BBCMUG therefore asked if PB is aware of any such negotiations, and if PB staff would commit to a statement that BBCM and its access routes are not now, nor will ever be, on the table for any land claim negotiations. PB staff said they are unaware of any such negotiations, but cannot make any statement in regard to land claims.

Facility Tour:

- GP asked PB staff (KM and GB, as PK had left earlier) to inspect the tide grid. It was pointed out that a galvanized steel ladder would be easy to install, and make it much less hazardous to access the tide grid deck. He also pointed out the large amount of mussel debris, the half-inch of slippery muck all over the grid, and the loose steel plates, which should be removed entirely to allow mussels and other scraped debris to fall between the beams. It was asked why the area isn't pressure-washed regularly. KM responded that environmental bureaucrats had said this was not allowed. However, it was pointed out that even so, using a push broom and regular hose should be equally effective. PB to investigate installing a ladder, and better cleaning procedures.

Future meetings:

- GB agreed that a meeting in about a month's time would be appropriate, and will send potential meeting dates and times. The meeting and tour wrapped up around 4:30 PM.