

BCMCA Meeting Notes – Open House Meeting at Parks Board Office, Nov 1/2018

Scheduled meeting time: 5 to 7 PM

Attending:

Park Board Staff:

- Sev Araujo, Manager, Commercial Operations (Chair)
- Tim Collins, Supervisor of Commercial Operations
- Cassio Thieves, Marina Operator II
- John Ross, Architect & Project Manager, City of Vancouver

BCMCA Directors:

- JC d’Almeida, President
- Ken Christie, Director
- Peter Derviller, Director
- Sean Smith, Director

Other Attendees:

- Approximately 25 to 30, both BCMCA members and other marina customers.

Tim Collins asked that everyone be respectful. Sev Araujo advised that recording of the meeting was not permitted.

Dock Replacement Project:

Overview given by John Ross, Project Manager. Project is at least 1 year behind schedule, due to numerous unforeseen circumstances, including a workplace accident at the plant, and the passing of the company’s chief engineer and designer. PB/City is frustrated and disappointed by lack of progress. Parks Board is hamstrung by how the contract is written, and John Ross apologized for the crisis in the project. They are withholding payments, but City Hall rationale is that penalty clauses only encourages higher bids and require the inclusion of bonus clauses for early completion. In this case there was only 1 bid, so not much choice. No explanation was offered as to why other contractors declined to bid.

The contractor advised the City that remaining floats are to be poured in November and delivered by December 1st, 2018 and the contract is to be substantially completed by the end of December. Mr. Ross does not have any information that indicates the contract will meet this timeline, when it has failed to meet previous timelines, and he does not have much faith in the contractor’s estimates.

Some holes in the concrete were caused by pieces of foam from the forms that were not properly cleaned out before pouring concrete. These will be repaired.

There have been 3 change orders so far:

- Removal of tide grid
- West side ramp to be replaced
- 1 other item, (this item was not recorded in our notes).

The Tide Grid was removed as it was deemed an “environmental hazard due to creosoted pilings”, (although the entire marina also uses creosote pilings), and dumping debris into the sea from hull scrapings which was “not acceptable”. Plus, facility was “not used much”. It was pointed out that the timing of the tide determines when work can be done on a tide grid, thus explaining why it appeared to be “not used” at times. The reply was “We are trying to do maintenance that has not been done in the past.”

There have been no cost over-runs so far. There will be an inspection by an engineer before final project sign-off.

Also, there will be a new marina assessment report (similar in scope to the one by Worley Parsons in 2013) to update PB on the condition of the rest of the marina.

Meanwhile, Kingfisher Contracting is addressing several of the remaining deficiencies noted by the WP 2013 report. This will be done in the last half of November 2018. It was noted by an attendee that the WP 2013 report had noted a piling on B dock was in poor shape, and has not been repaired, it is now close to failing. Sev said he will look into it.

Several people in the room suggested that it would only be fair if there was zero moorage rate increase next year, due to the inconveniences the dock replacement project has caused, and is still ongoing. Sev ruled out any notion of zero increase, and countered that the marina has lost some \$350,000 in revenues due to lost moorage spaces. Later Sev said “I will look into it.”

It was further suggested that due to the problems experienced during the last year that there should be a rebate on part of the 2018 moorage fees. Sev Aroujo initially said that would not happen and later said he would consider the issue.

Meeting Room:

Tim Collins noted that the meeting room had been in dire need of upgrading. The lockers were a source of smells. It turned out some fuel canisters had been stored in the lockers, which was a hazard. The lockers have been removed, and walls repainted. One attendee complained about the loss of the lockers, especially for those with small boats or kayaks and no other storage space. No alternative has been provided. Tim said “only 4 lockers were actually used”, but will look for alternatives.

A member asked what happened to the books that had been donated. Cassio could only say that perhaps the work crew cleaning out the room for painting was “over-zealous”, and “it fell through the cracks”.

The small TV now in the room was “free”. Other members asked if perhaps some white-boards, or a projection screen could be installed. It was noted any reno work these days invokes the need for testing for asbestos and lead paint.

Question was asked if we could ever get the Caretaker’s Suite space back. Answer is a flat “No”, this is controlled by another City program.

Booking of the meeting room for events will be handled through the marina office.

Dock Boxes & Dinghy storage:

Tim says that engineers tell them that the dock boxes & other storage was causing the floats to list. Some dock boxes were “over-sized” or filled with heavy items.

Several members countered that dock boxes are allowed at Heather Marina, and other marinas. They are especially important to small boat owners with few storage options. Same for dinghy storage racks.

All dinghy docks have been removed. Leaving dinghies in the water at slips will not be allowed. Dinghies must be stored either on boats, or at the new dinghy storage facility at the back of the parking lot. There will be no storage fee.

A dinghy cart is available to move dinghies, and staff will be available to assist. However it was pointed out that there will be many times (evenings, weekends) when people will want to move their dinghies, but staff will not be available. A member pointed out that the dinghy moving process is a safety hazard - some people will be unable to physically move dinghies by themselves. This is not a good solution. Also it was mentioned the new space can only hold about 90 dinghies.

Tags will be provided to show dinghy ownership. This should help deal with “derelict” or unclaimed dinghies. It was commented that this should have been done a long time ago.

It was mentioned several times that the decision to remove dock boxes, and dinghy floats, with no input from members and the lack of consultation is troublesome. It signals that PB is not open to meaningful discussion. One member said, “If you had asked for input, we could have provided advice.” And another: “There is no collaboration. Why don’t you have a “working group?”

Tim said he wants to be open to more suggestions, but there is a “cultural problem” at the marina, with too many “one-sided voices”. He did not elaborate on what this means.

Tim and Sev said the dinghy solution “isn’t finalized yet.”

Bike Lane:

Tim Collins advised that a plan for re-arranging the intersection of the bike lane and roadway at the parking lot gate, to try and minimize conflicts, is being developed. This involves switching locations of the roadway and bike lane. A diagram will be provided soon. Also, the parking lot gate will be upgraded with a proper gate controlled by card-lock. The changes cannot be made until after consultation with other affected groups (local residents, bike user groups etc.) has taken place.

Lighting and Power:

95% of old 125W lamps have been replaced with 18W LED lights. Sev says \$25,000 of hydro expenses are not being recovered. This was debated, as some members pointed out that those not being billed directly for electricity still benefit from the lights on the docks, parking lot and washrooms, and those costs should already be covered through their moorage fees. Questions raised as to whether the intent is to make electrical fees cover all marina facilities, i.e., parking lot and dock lights too, this seems like double-dipping.

Tim Collins advised that the “marine cords” clause in the contract will be enforced. Much discussion about the improper use of domestic quality extension cords. However, staff will not be allowed to unplug cords. Tim said they are trying to resolve the issue “without being authoritarian”.

Future Capital Requests:

Sev said there is \$8.4 million in the new Capital Plan allotted to “marinas, docks and seawalls”. However he could not say if any of that was definitely allotted to the Burrard Civic marina.

It was pointed out that some Parks Board facilities, like golf courses, have their own self-funded capital plans, so why doesn't the marina have one? Sev said that the golf courses were the only facilities to have self-funded capital plans, and also said “if I was in charge, there would be capital reserves.” He also mentioned there are people trying to take away the golf courses reserves.

Sev had also mentioned that “the City's capital plan is almost set. A business case must be made for everything.” But, “for projects up to \$100,000 we have discretion.”

Sev said it has been put forward to capital planners to seriously look into options for dredging, to deal with the issue of parts of the marina silting in. Any dredging would be limited to the northwest part of the marina. Dredging from shore would be less expensive but might not be permitted because of interference with other users of the area.

Marina Fees:

Sev would not commit to disclosing what amount of fee increase might proposed for 2019, however he said the claim that the marina was 30% below market rates would “definitely not be supported”. Rate increases proposed would “definitely not be 8%”, and “definitely not 0%”. (however in relation to the proposal for a rate freeze due to the construction project, he later said “I will look into it”.) Sev later said it could be “rate of inflation or somewhere thereabouts”.

There was supposed to have been a meeting this fall with marina representatives, to discuss what are “true comparables” for marinas. However, for reasons not discussed, this meeting never happened. Sev wants to make the meeting a priority for January 2019. Sev wants the meeting to consist of 2 members from the BCMCA, and 2 non-BCMCA members.

It was pointed out though that the proposed new fees will go to a Board meeting in likely in late November, with a vote on accepting the proposed fees “later”. Questions about what is the point of waiting until January to have a meeting to discuss how to set rates, when PB will submit a proposal to the Board in late November. Request were made to be part of the process of setting rates recommendations before they are submitted to the board. Sev said that's not possible.

Sev said “I promise you I will give you fair warning of the board meeting” to decide on rates. Marina patrons will be free to speak to this agenda item at the meeting.

Attendees stated there was still confusion over what makes for “comparable marinas”. Sev said he looks at anything in Burrard Inlet, “West Van to Port Moody”, but not the river. (However, Milltown Marina on the North Arm has been used several times in the past, including the Park Board's justification of the 30% below market claim.) Sev said, “We know the BCMCA did a survey, but it is not acceptable to include marinas in Point Roberts and Tsawwassen.”

Peter D. said he wants it in the minutes that the BCMCA wants to submit proof to the Board that the evidence used for the basis of the 30% below market rate claim was grossly exaggerated. Sev said "I have your submission".

In the discussion that followed, Sev asked: "What do you think the increase should be?" Peter: "Zero. Your 8% increase in 2018 has used up at least 3 years of inflation adjustments." Sev's reply was: "I can commit to something that is fair."

Meeting concluded at 7:45.