

**Waterfront Recreation Committee
Minutes
May 7, 2007**

Attending: Members Steve Gates, Lori Stirn, Laney Gale, Doug Archbald, Richard Sassara, Ann Frodel; Commissioners Sherry Bohn and Hoby Streich; Absent: Michael Schock; Staff Members: Michael McElwee, Linda Hull; Others: Katie Crafts, CGWA, Jim Grady, Adam Monahan: CGKA; Mark Worth.

Sherry Bohn opened the meeting at 4:05 p.m. and stated the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the issue of kite pumping and drying at the Event Site for this season; this is the final issue to be resolved before adoption of the Delta Management Plan (DMP). The Commission requested the Waterfront Recreation Committee discuss the pros and cons of this issue and make a recommendation regarding this activity. The Commission will accept this recommendation as policy with staff concurrence. Sherry reiterated that the current policy is for no kiteboarding activity at the Event Site, including rigging of any kind. To allow pumping/drying would mean a Commission policy change.

Michael McElwee stated the DMP was a good plan and reflects the best interest of everyone. He also said he is not a windsurfer or a kiteboarder and he is trying to understand how the two sports can be accommodated in close proximity. Sherry said before she signed off on the DMP it should be very clear and specify exactly what is allowed and where.

Steve Gates said the committee did talk about pumping at its other meetings earlier in the year and the conclusion was that there would be no rigging, including pumping. Sherry said because there is no signage at the site specifically stating "no pumping" that people are taking the extra mile. Because it is preseason and the crowds aren't here, there has been no strict enforcement of this rule. Michael said what has changed is that the sites are now almost connected at lower water levels and the kites can park at the Event Site to carry gear over to the sandbar, instead of accessing at the Spit. Michael also noticed that the kiteboard people were parking in the lot correctly but that the windsurfers were parking in the red Fire Lane tow zone. Michael felt that early in the season when it isn't busy, it would be pretty hard to trespass someone and thought perhaps there could be options for non-busy times. Enforcement is one difficult issue for the Port and most of this will have to be self-policed. The tow zone will be strictly enforced this year.

Jim Grady stated that humans naturally take a mile when given an inch and that the participants do not want the responsibility of self-policing. He felt if you allow pumping on the grass it will lead to launching. Jim said the CGKA met the evening before and asked that the Port consider allowing 10% of the east end of the Event Site for kite pumping and drying; they believe it will encourage self-policing. Lori Stirn asked if it would require fencing, because if you had 40 kites pumping and drying it would take up considerable more space than 10%. Ann Frodel said it isn't busy now but in a month there will be huge crowds. She polled various kites and windsurfers and concluded that self-policing will not work either. It is too busy and safety would be a big concern. Richard Sassara stated he was concerned that self-policing wouldn't work on non-locals especially.

Michael said at the Commission meeting Pepi said kids are in the east end with families and that kites would carry inflated kites through them; he was also concerned that some kites have lines hanging from them and if a little child was hit by an inflated kite would it be a safety hazard? Steve Gates said an inflated kite is not a beach ball and that families with little kids do hang out in that protected cove area on the east end and it is heavily used. It is not an easy decision and although it is not a huge problem now because it isn't busy, it will become one.

Mark Worth said if 10% of the Event Site was given to kites that the kite community would protect it adding that the Port never does anything for kites but take their money. Hoby Streich said that is not true and he can look at the accounting for the site at any time. Steve said the issue is purely one of safety and that because of the Delta the Event Site is the only place on the waterfront for little kids now; to allow kites in the area would create a new conflict. Ann agreed and felt walking through with the gear wouldn't be a problem, but not inflated. She said the important thing is that the safety rules were for all users. Sherry said the Port recognizes that kiting is growing here and it is actively addressing the needs of that group. Katie Crafts said if kiting is allowed at the Event Site there should

be no fence that would underscore an "us" vs. "them" attitude. Sherry said she researched other sites and there is no combined areas for the two sports that she could find in the U.S.

Jim asked how it would be enforced. Would there be a warning first? The kites are unhappy about giving up 600' of sandbar to a Safe Zone. (The yellow pylon is actually 500' from the Event Site beach.) Richard stated the committee isn't addressing enforcement issues, only if inflated kites should be allowed on the grass at the Event Site.

Steve said perhaps the Port could consider a timeline from a safety perspective; he felt banning the sport is not good for the area or the local economy. He believes there are times of the year that safety conflicts should be minimized but that perhaps September 15 to May 15 could be a time to allow the shared use at this site.

Michael said for this season there would probably have to be a verbal warning and then if not compliant the Port might have to call the City Police to issue a trespass citation.

Laney Gale said the Delta, the Event Site and the waterfront as a whole is a gift to many people and many different users and safety of all people should be the main concern. Doug Archbald stated he felt it should be more restrictive to begin with and see what the experience will be for long-term.

Michael stated we are meeting today because the Port recognizes that kiting is an important sport. Steve added that hours have gone into this DMP and the Safe Zone by all parties and the Port has been positive in the coordination of it.

The committee had consensus that they support the current Port policy of no kiteboarding activity at the Event Site and that signage should be placed immediately at the site, which would state specifically, "no rigging, pumping, drying, launching, landing."

Adam Monahan, CGKA Communications staff, asked if the policy could be reviewed at the end of the season to allow for off-season use of the Event Site. Sherry said the committee could meet this summer to see how the Delta Management Plan was going, if it was being respected, and would consider an off-season use for next year.

Steve said that the City's waterfront park will have a very family-friendly area and this situation is a good opportunity for the Event Site users to support that effort. Michael said the DMP would be revised to include specific language about Event Site kite use prohibition. Language will also be added to review the policy in August 2007 with consideration for potential non-seasonal use of the Event Site for kite pumping and drying.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Next Meeting: August 2007

Prepared by Linda Hull