

**Waterfront Recreation Committee
Minutes
November 1, 2007**

Attending: Members Steve Gates, Lori Stirn, Michael Schock, Laney Gale, Doug Archbald, Richard Sassara, Ann Frodel; Commissioner Sherry Bohn; Staff Members: Michael McElwee, Linda Hull, and Mike Doke; Guests: Katie Crafts, CGWA; Josh Sceva, Hood River Yacht Club

1. **Guest Introductions/Additions to the Agenda:** Sherry Bohn opened the meeting at 3:05 p.m. After introductions, a discussion on an Event Site memorial tree was added to the Event Site agenda.
2. **Delta Update:** Michael McElwee stated the Port's appreciation for the attendees of this meeting. The Delta event, which occurred almost a year ago, is continuing to be analyzed regarding its impacts on recreation. The Waterfront Access Zone appeared to be effective in separating the windsurf/kiteboard sports and the sites seemed busier than ever before. Ann Frodel stated she felt it was difficult to enforce on the water. Steve Gates added there were several "show offs" but that peer pressure by the kiteboard community helped to decrease the violators as the season progressed. All agreed that self-policing was the key to the enforcement and safety. Gates thought that next year would be even more effective because people will be used to the plan. Frodel asked if the yellow buoy could be placed higher so it would float in high water. Linda Hull will check with Bruce Peterson and Deputy Anderson on that. Bohn felt like the yellow buoy was an important symbol for awareness of the congested zone. CGKA's contribution to clean up the Delta and make it safer for all users was commended. Their members were also instrumental in the self-enforcement of the rules regarding the demarcation zone and all users appreciated those efforts.

McElwee wanted the committee to understand that there is difference in opinion and values with regards to the Delta uses. As the Delta matures, trees will come and other ecological changes that the fish and wildlife and riverkeeper people will be watching. Not every group supports the heavy recreational use of the waterfront. The Port will continue to work with State Lands to manage the area. Michael Schock asked if the recreation community should be concerned about it being shut down at some point? McElwee doubted that, but just wanted everyone to be aware of the other interests. Bohn stated she felt as the Delta changes over time, other groups will become more active to protect those interests.

McElwee said the Port monitored the water quality in the Nichols basin all summer and that there are no issues with the water quality there. He also updated the committee on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Study to examine the long-term impacts of the Delta on the Hood River waterfront from the standpoint of navigation, recreation and habitat. This effort should be completed in 8-10 months. The Corps, Port and Naito Development are all contributing funds to this \$200,000 Planning Assistance Study that the Port initiated as a way to look ahead and plan for impacts to future activities there.

McElwee discussed the proposed Delta removal and fill project for which application has been made jointly to the Corps and State Lands. It would shift sand below the Ordinary High Water mark from the Delta over to the Event Site beach and in front of the Luhr Jensen building at the same elevation, creating more windsurf launch area to the west now that the Delta has formed on the east end of the Event Site. It needs a biological assessment and a sediment evaluation and the budget will dictate if the project can be done. Costs estimates are from \$3.5/cubic yard (dry) to \$8/cy wet. McElwee previously briefed the CGWA on the project and the organization is supportive of it. It was asked if the dolphins will be removed. McElwee said SDS is the only user of these Port-owned dolphins and they have agreed not to use them during the summer season. Frodel felt the fill of the western edge is a long-range solution to expanding access. Richard Sassara asked if the Delta will fill back in over time. McElwee said it probably would depend upon the flows from the Hood River and Mt. Hood.

3. **Event Site:** McElwee stated it felt like the parking lot was busier this year than last and revenue was up with more people buying annual passes. Linda Hull will also provide the Spit parking numbers to the committee. Frodel asked if additional parking was planned anywhere. She felt more personnel is needed to monitor the parking lot because on very busy days when the lot closed, there were still open spaces. She also felt the temporary spaces should be made into permanent parking spots on busy days and short-term parking should be on the street. Frodel also felt Port personnel or the host should be in the parking lot directing people where to park and enforcing the RV spaces.

There was consensus that surveying the customers of the Event Site for dog and other issues would be valuable to obtain feedback for policy decisions. There were several dog bites this year at both the Event Site and the Spit.

Off-season kiteboard use at the Event Site was discussed. The committee's **consensus** was to allow kiteboard access from the Event Site during from October 1 through April 30. Bohn will take that recommendation back to the Commission for a policy discussion. CGKA's request to use the east end of the Event Site for rigging kites before launching at the sandbar was tabled until the spring meeting because the removal and fill project may not be accomplished.

McElwee said a long-time windsurfer from Washington died recently and his friends would like to plant a tree in his memory at the Event Site. Lori Stirn said she would provide examples of memorial policies to the Port for guidance as to size and limitations, etc.

4. **2008 Issues & Recommendations:** Various issues were discussed.
- Frodel asked if the Port could charge a launch fee (honor system) at the public boat ramp. Staff will look into the Oregon State Marine Board grant limitations on fees.
 - Linda Hull told the committee the Port is submitting an application to the Oregon Parks & Recreation Trail Grant program to provide funding for Phase 1 of the Riverfront Pedestrian Trail System that would connect each end of the City's Waterfront Park to the Event Site and the Hook, approximately 1,400 linear feet. Lori Stirn said she would also check into any SDC funds that might be available for this project.
 - A kiteboard school requested consideration of an inflation station at the Event Site. It was suggested that the schools might obtain a generator or use solar power at the Spit instead, especially since the decision has not been made to allow kite pumping at the Event Site in the future.
 - McElwee said the Port will be upgrading the landscaping and the picnic tables at the Event Site this winter/spring. Frodel said the grass is always too wet and wondered if it could be overseeded by drought-resistant grass the city is using in the park that would not require so much water. She said Steve Stampfli was her contact for it.
 - The citizen complaint about the restroom doors being left open for ventilation purposes and violating her privacy was discussed. Staff will look into solutions, possibly more fans inside, to resolve the issue.
 - The placement of the kickers at the sandbar was discussed. Staff will work with the State Marine Board, schools and CGKA to find a better spot for placement due to safety concerns.
 - CGKA/CGWA flyer/signage regarding self-rescue, hazards, barges, "kite at your own risk", etc., was discussed. It was suggested that the daily passes have the warnings on the back, but that staff should work with the two groups during the off-season for correct wording on any public information.
 - Marina Issues: McElwee said the Port is working on a plan for expanding the Marina this year and the proposal will go before the Commission for a decision in the near future. Additional slips could be added to the existing piers already in the water with expansion of the other docks to follow. This work could add approximately 80 new slips. Currently there are approximately **150** on the waiting list. It was asked again if the Port should change its policy to prioritize Port District or Gorge region residents over others from out of the area. Lori Stirn said staff should check with Special Districts to see if it can discriminate in this manner. Laney Gale asked about dry storage plans and if a hoist was being considered. McElwee said the Port is looking at that aspect in this plan. Doug Archbald stated that dry

storage availability needs a hoist and that it is important to sailboats in particular because they are so hard to trailer with the large keels. McElwee said he would meet with the Yacht Club to get additional input for any recommendations regarding this issue. The old Port maintenance yard may be a potential dry storage space, as well as a small portion of the Port's current yard.

Gale asked if the Marina issues could be first on the agenda at the future meetings so that more discussion and input can be received from all committee members before they leave early. Bohn and McElwee agreed that the Marina should receive more attention from the committee in the future, and possibly a meeting where only the Marina expansion is discussed.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Next Meeting: Date to be determined.

Prepared by Linda Hull

