

**Waterfront Recreation Committee  
Minutes – July 18, 2011 - 3:30 p.m.  
Minutes – July 20, 2011 – 2:30 p.m.  
Marina Center Boardroom**

Attending: Members Doug Archbald, Bill Lake (CGWA), Forrest Rae (CGKA), Ann Frodel, Pepi Gerald, Michael Schock, and Lori Stirn; Commissioners Jon Davies and Rich McBride; from Port staff (ex-officio members) Michael McElwee and Laurie Borton.

Absent: Cori Bison (07-18-11 only); Laney Gale (07-18-11 and 07-20-11)

Guests: Sign-In Sheets Attached

Commissioner Jon Davies opened the July 18 meeting at 3:35 p.m. and committee members were introduced. Davies announced that he would be stepping down from the Committee and that Commissioner Rich McBride would be appointed at the August 9 Commission meeting to the Waterfront Recreation Committee. For the benefit of the guests in attendance, Davies commented the committee's purpose was to make recommendations to the Commission and that while there may be consensus on some issues anything 'major' would require Commission approval—such as today's discussion on kiting at the Event Site. Davies informed the guests that the committee would quickly go through the agenda items with time allowed for public comment.

**Approval of April 27, 2011 Meeting Minutes**

Motion: Move to approve minutes of the April 27, 2011 meeting.  
Move: Archbald  
Second: Stirn  
Discussion: None  
Vote: Unanimous

**Marina**

Floatplane Dock: The feasibility of a reuse of the floatplane dock for small power boats has been discussed and that the Airport Advisory Committee does not foresee a problem as long as slips for three floatplanes are maintained. Michael McElwee, Executive Director, noted a repurposed use was a feasibility discussion and no changes would take place immediately. Currently slips are used summer months by school concessionaires and the youth sailing program. Doug Archbald said, on behalf of the Hood River Yacht Club, there was support for other uses and suggested some current tenants could be offered space at the floatplane dock which would then free up a moorage slip for better uses.

Upgrades – Keycard System: Borton reported the access card system for the moorage slips is working well with no known problems or complaints. The floatplane dock is still accessed by key. [*Post-meeting note: The estimate to add a system to the floatplane dock is \$3200 for use by two annual tenants and seasonal users. Different keyways were used for the floatplane and moorage docks.*]

**Parking on Portway, N. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, and South of Ticket Booth**

The 3-week grace period for issuing warnings for parking violations has ended. As of July 11 violators are in jeopardy of being towed. To date no vehicles have been towed.

McBride reported on the number of Event Site user passes that were sold as of June 20, which included a breakdown of percentages indicating if the user's primary sport was windsurfing, kiteboard, or both. A user fee is not being collected at The Spit this year.

**Action Item:** The Committee requested an update on the number of passes sold and the ratio. *[Post meeting note: As of July 19, 555 Event Site passes had been sold. Windsurfing purchases were 27% (149 passes); kiteboarding was 40% (220 passes); both sports was 23% (126 passes); kayaking was 0% (1 pass); paddleboarding was 0% (1 pass); and 58 purchasers did not indicate (10%).*

**Action Item:** The Committee also requested the number of days overflow parking on Lot 1 has been opened because the Event Site has been full. *[Post meeting note: Event Site closed for one hour on July 3; 3.5 hours on July 4; 10 minutes on July 20; and a closure on July 22. Maintenance staff closes and locks the gate and cones the entrance then monitors for reopening.]*

**The Spit, the Sandbar, the Hook**

Not addressed. Time was deferred to Event Site discussions.

**Event Site**

Review buoy placement; i.e. distance from end of jetties: No discussion.

Long-term use of kiting year round: Davies opened the meeting to public comment. Davies said that those who had signed up to speak would be called upon and if time allowed, additional comment would be heard.

Gerald clarified there is Marina Beach access for kite pumping and drying directly west of the jetty restroom. At the July 12 Commission meeting he asked for some flexibility for a bit more space at the Marina but cautioned this was not public knowledge yet as he had not been available to meet with Port staff regarding signage. Davies said that kiting is available at the Event Site until July 31, as well as from the Hook, the Marina Beach, and the Spit. Davies clarified the Commission gave discretion to the Executive Director regarding the end date of July 31 for kite launching and landing at the Event Site—this could end earlier if the sandbar reappears before the end of the month. The following summarizes public comment and submitted emails:

*\*Note: The 'Flight Deck' was explained as a box marked on the grass with in/out directional arrows for launching and landing only. Once a kiter lands, the kite and lines are to be moved upland and out of the box.*

<p>Bob Wendler Both meetings</p>	<p>Keep Event Site ("ES") open year-round to kite launching &amp; landing. Improve trail to Nichols Basin and reuse for SUP and kayaks. Do not remove any more trees. It was also his opinion schools at the ES cause congestion and the Port should consider moving them to the Marina Beach, the Hook, and the Spit along with adding a pay booth at the Marina Beach. Steve Gates, owner of Big Winds and a windsurfing concessionaire at the Event Site, stated that he would argue against any removal of school concessions from the Event Site. The discussion between Wendler and Gates became heated and Chairman Davies stopped the discussion.</p>
<p>Phil Lorimer 07-18-11</p>	<p>Keep ES open. Wasted time in decision-making based on water conditions.</p>
<p>Melissa Still 07-18-11 and by email</p>	<p>Many of her comments were covered by Wendler. Thinks kilters should body drag before another gets on the Flight Deck. Adding sand or carpeting along the banks at the Nichols Basin would be more user-friendly to SUPs. Solutions offered by email include: increase daily and season use fee passes (life &amp; recreation is not free); sign a "rules &amp; regs" card to hang on vehicle rearview mirror—issue a 'widget' to wear so all can see you know the rules and have paid the daily fee; no dogs—period!; use a volunteer group with bright yellow T-shirts to let the public know who they are and they are there for their safety and safe</p>

	conditions; circular drop off & pick up at Nichols Basin—no parking all day; if the dolphins were removed, use the Riverfront Trail as a Flight Deck for kilters; signage should be larger and in Spanish. (Examples of signage from Cape Hatteras was also provided.)
Joe Still 07-18-11	His comments also covered by Wendler. ES seen as supply & demand and weather issue. Said there are inherent dangers with kite lines in a small space when there are more people within the same space.
Randy Orzeck 07-18-11	Keep ES access open and expand, including Marina. ES signage should indicate as advanced site. Spit amenities need improvement. Vehicle access at Nichols should be for drop off only (and stairway would be good).
Debbie Lesbo 07-18-11	Open ES to kilters. Other comments covered by Orzeck.
Eric Cohn 07-18-11 and email	Keep ES open to kiting but keep safety separation regions and a safe space for school lessons. Provide more water access. It doesn't feel like it's "us versus them" anymore and it's not good, long term, to feel 'we won' because someone then feels like they lose. He likes it that families can go to one site and participate in multiple sports such as windsurfing, kiting, SUP. As for who buys passes, he believes the more likely correlation is age rather than sport.  <i>Davies asked that if there is going to be a problem if the sandbar wraps in front of the ES? Cohn responded that it may pose problems for both windsurfers and kilters, especially beginners.</i>
Richard Hallman 07-18-11	Diversify access points so there's not a critical mass. He has not problem with user fees that support access and amenities. Suggested Flight Deck should be launch only or land only.  <i>Frodel asked Hallman if The Spit was a fee site, would people pay if there were amenities. Hallman responded yes, with the money collected going to that area.</i>  <i>Davies then briefly reported that the monies collected from user fees do not cover the Port's expenditures on site maintenance, projects, etc.</i>  <i>Rae cautioned that safety decisions should be based on fact. Hallman, an ER nurse, commented that equipment and lessons have become safer, and that in an unscientific study from three years ago during a 4-month period the number of accidents was even between windsurfing and kiteboarding.</i>
Dana Love 07-18-11	Sees shift from windsurfing to kiteboarding. Flight Deck is working and volunteers are helping. Kilters need more access or they travel to Stevenson, Mosier, or Rufus.
Kean Rogers 07-18-11	Allowing more sports increases risk. Jetty repair wind shadow causes windsurfers to drift into kite area. Safety over convenience needs to be the number one issue. He also thanked the kilters for volunteering at the Flight Deck.
Ted Cramer 07-18-11	ES good for advance level kilters and Marina good for beginners. Believes kilters will choose to go to sandbar when levels recede. Can sand be added to crossing from ES to sandbar so it's not so deep?
Jodi Craig 07-18-11	Thinks opening ES to kilters has been good, but for advanced skills. Urged everyone to keep an open mind to complement access for all. Thinks there would be more use at the Spit if improved.
Spruce Baugher 07-18-11	Believes trend is shifting to kiting. He chooses to walk into ES because he doesn't have a lot of money.
Steve Gates Both Meetings	Although he instigated opening ES to shared use due to high water, he's conflicted because summer traffic has complicated the use. He cautioned

	<p>giving too much heed to trends as he's teaching windsurfing lessons to larger numbers than in the past. He said congestion is compromising the safety and quality of the users' experience. The Waterfront should be viewed as a whole and not just the Event Site and there should be a long, comprehensive use plan for the safety and enjoyment of all water sports. He thinks kiting should be allowed at the eastern part of the Marina Beach.</p> <p><i>Gates was asked by Schock if he was teaching at the ES when it was busy. Gates responded that lessons are conducted at The Hook.</i></p>
Jerryann Devlin 07-18-11	<p>The most important thing is safety with the overlap of people and sports. Access needs to be controlled along with an education on sports etiquette. She also believes dogs should not be allowed on the ES grass.</p>
Justin Menasco Both Meetings	<p>Self-policing at the ES has stepped up and thinks kite access at the Marina Beach should be allowed. Look at the big picture to address all users with permanent rules, such as an occupancy standard, if all sports are in one area due to conditions</p>
Katie Crafts Both Meetings and by Email	<p>Representing CGWA, she urged the committee and the Port to take time to consider any changes through a well thought-out and well researched strategic plan as a whole and not a narrow focus on only the ES with a more public process and adequate time to consider all perspectives. In the near-term, as a usable sandbar reappears and continues to grow she encourages return of the ES to pump and dry as soon as possible. She also thanked the Port's flexibility in addressing ongoing issues.</p> <p><i>Crafts asked about dredging the sandbar. McElwee said the permit to move 10,000 CY in front of the ES is in the third year of the permit process and that approval and funding are unknown at this time.</i></p>
Darren Craig 07-18-11	<p>Regarding dogs, his advice was to call Animal Control.</p>
(?) Kimball 07-18-11	<p>Kudos were given to everyone for talking because he said it's not happening anywhere else. He said the \$50 season use fee is a bargain because he pays anywhere from \$10 to \$15 to \$40 a day on the east coast. Agrees dogs are a problem. Suggested posting a 'safety committee' board for volunteers to sign up to help (or consider paying Flight Deck volunteer). Signage and flexibility should be monitored monthly.</p>
Kent Heighton Email	<p>The number of people kiting is increasing and use at the ES should be shared. Besides the sandbar it's the only safe place to launch. For safety reasons access to the kite launch/land area should be controlled with fencing or signage and the kite zone should be off limits to beach goers and site seers.</p>
Greg Crafts Email	<p>He was happy to see a mixed use and mutual respect early in the season but as water levels go down the ES should be restricted to windsurfing alone for the rest of the summer. Crowds have resulted in near collisions. It is important to accommodate both kite and windsurf launch sites on the river but recognize the safety issues involved with mixing them at the same beach.</p>
Laura Green, John Hadley Email	<p>The ES can be successfully shared and benefit both groups. "Know thy neighbor rather than shun them. Join forces and keep Hood River a progressive environment for all sports."</p>
Bruce Peterson Email	<p>Shared use this spring and early summer was a good solution for a challenging river access situation; however, with full summer traffic and beach use the active launching of kites poses some serious risks and hazards to other ES users. Active kiteboard launching and landing should be prohibited from the ES for the duration of the summer season and moved to the sandbar where there is more space and less user</p>

	conflict.
Deborah Cyparski Email	Continue to accommodate kites. The Port should have a master plan to look at ways to provide safe river access for the growing number of kites as it did in the 90's with windsurfing.
Susan Okurowski Email	There are many unsuspecting people hanging out at the ES. To prevent accidents, have someone in charge and make sure people get in/out of the landing area; have a 1 crash policy and you're out; limit the number of kites.
Patricia Barnhart Email	The ES usage should stay as is, roughly half and half. There are more places for windsurfers to launch up and down the Columbia; even with the sandbar exposed kites have fewer options.
John Heeren Email	The Marina Beach is the perfect area to develop into a kite launch area to alleviate sandbar congestion. There are simply too many people at the ES and luckily serious incident have been avoided. Kite use at the east end of the ES has eliminated the swimming area for kids whose parents are sailing or watching from the beach and this needs to be considered.
Brian Watts Email	Agrees with comments submitted by Bruce Peterson. Under the pump and dry only for kites, with the launch zone at the sandbar, use of the ES for both groups has worked well. If kite launching is permanently allowed, eventually there will be an accident with an unaware spectator or site user.
John Wittnebel Email	Expressed his appreciation for launching and landing at the ES during high water.
Ted Matzen Email	If permanent kite launching at the ES is allowed, he will start spending his time and money windsurfing the summers on Maui.
Crissy Trask Email	As a safety issue, the Event Site is a good place for windsurfers working on advancing themselves; it is not a site that should tolerate kites, or windsurfers who are going entirely too fast given the number of people often down in the water. Kites have suggested moving down to Luhr Jensen but this spot has more obstacles and is not suited to intermediate windsurfers and to carrying large heavy gear. Separate launches to keep things peaceful and safe for everyone participating in either sport.
Aaron Schofield Email	Hopes the Event Site is supported for both sports—as a family spot where his wife can windsurf, he can kiteboard, and the children can play on the beach.
Chris Boston Email	In favor of allowing kite launching/landing from the ES year-round. If a majority of paid users are kites it makes no sense to restrict them to a small strip of grass at the east end. Current 50/05 split has worked well and if implemented year-round people would learn the rules and accept them. Also supports re-opening of Marina to kites year-round to help alleviate congestion at the ES. Once novice windsurfers improve skills they will also be using the ES, thus more overcrowding.
Mike Haase 07-20-11	Acknowledgment CGKA for the work done for kite access at the ES and Marina Beach.
Bruce Fournier Email	There is sound logic behind keeping a separation of sports and recommends getting back to that before someone gets hurt. On a busy day the ES is 'complete lunacy; scary actually.'
Sharon Chow 07-20-11 and by Email	As ES Hosts, safety is their primary concern. Extending launching and landing from the ES has created a division of friends. The water 'real estate' in front of the ES is decreasing with lower water levels so windsurfers and kites tend to meet in the middle. If the decision prevails to have the launch/land area permanent there needs to be continuous, ongoing education for spectators, beach users, and water users alike. As the sandbar emerges and during the peak congestion period from the beginning of July until after Labor Day, to maintain safety for all and alleviate congestion, the same kite protocol should be

	<p>maintained as in previous years (i.e. pump/dry).</p> <p><i>Rae asked if there been any injury incidents. Chow responded she was not aware of any injuries but that there were near misses.</i></p>
<p>Patric Barr 07-20-11</p>	<p>Barr said that he would like to see the Es kite use continue. He recommended the Port be proactive in working with both associations and he encouraged the audience, as a community, to continue an active approach.</p> <p><i>Schock commended CGWA, Steve Gates, and the Port for the actions taken to allow the provisional kiting use at the ES.</i></p>
<p>Bruce Lemky 07-20-11</p>	<p>Sees a shift to kiting. Prior to this meeting he'd witnessed kilters rush to a girl in the kite area and move her to safety and provide education on why it wasn't safe for her to be there. He sees kites launch every 10 to 15 seconds from the Flight Deck.</p>
<p>Options for continued kiting at Event Site from 07-20-11 meeting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use buoy line for north/south delineation from Event Site beach and look at location of concessionaires in master planning</li> <li>• Record and observe actual data at the Event Site for the next 11 days</li> <li>• Use a floating buoy as an indicator of water levels</li> <li>• Use a 'red flag' condition; however, not favored as a day-to-day solution</li> </ul>

**Adjourn (July 18 meeting)**

Because the meeting was getting close to 5:00 p.m. and the committee would not have time for any discussion, he recommended recessing the meeting and reconvene on Wednesday, July 20, 2011 at 2:30 p.m. at which time there would be an opportunity for public comment. The July 18 meeting was closed at 5:10 p.m.

**July 20, 2011**

Commissioner Jon Davies reconvened the July 18 meeting at 2:30 p.m. and immediately opened public comment on kiting at the Event Site with priority given to guests who did not attend or speak at the July 18 meeting. (Comments incorporated into the table above.)

Michael McElwee, Executive Director, clarified that the "box" (or flight deck) is open until July 31 unless kite launching and landing is closed earlier based on the sandbar resurfacing. The Port Commission did not give him authority to extend the date past July 31. If the Committee were to recommend an extension, this recommendation would not go to the Commission until August 9.

Michael Schock said he did not see any reason to extending launching and landing privileges past July 31 and it was his opinion that it should go back to the pump/dry/carry inflated kites to the sandbar. Schock also supported kiting at the Marina Beach east end of the beach and swimming on the west end (with signage in place).

Forrest Rae said that without having discussed this with the CGKA Board, he saw no reason to shut down the Event Site to launching and landing and those decisions should be based on fact rather than fear and doubt. He said an overall policy for site use should be considered.

Cori Bison suggested that kiting 'as is' should stay in place through July 31 with continued monitoring. Bison also commented that for a long-term plan there should be more public input. She also favored opening the Marina to kiting; however, the east end was awkward. Davies questioned if the uses should be switched because swimmers on the west end were closer to the Hood River and swift currents.

Lori Stirn recommended sticking to the July 31 date. She said safety should be the priority and commended the public for stepping up to help with the 'flight deck' but suggested there could be more education for the general public to avoid unsafe conditions (i.e. spectators on the lawn with kites) and questioned if the number of people at any given time should be limited.

Rich McBride said the provisional use at the Event Site would end July 31 unless a Special Meeting of the Commission was called prior to August 9. He said that the Port needs to look at the waterfront as a whole to reconsider/design to provide equal and more access. He said he could see the possibility of a long-term 'flight deck' for advanced kites. He also McBride also commented that he believed the Marina was underutilized and thought about flipping uses, but he saw issues with both. He commented the Port would do what it could to help the recreation community in a safe way.

Ann Frodel said she favored going back to the pump and dry area only and that no long term decision should be made until the sandbar reappears and stays.

Doug Archbald questioned ending kite launching and landing on July 31. He said he's not sure that unsafe conditions are manifested by a mixed use—he believes its related more to the number of people. For long-term consideration a master access plan should be considered using consultants and outside opinions and that as many access 'rules' should be created as possible to avoid day-to-day decisions. In the near-term, Archbald believes one option could be extending the delineation line into the water to serve both windsurfing and kiteboarding so that each knows their corridor.

Bill Lake, as the CGWA representative, reported that membership had been polled and the opinion was to end Event Site kite launching and landing on July 31, go back to the pump & dry area, and to permit kites at the east end of the Marina Beach. As a lawyer, he questioned if the Port needs to consider a standard of keeping 200 feet away from kite lines. Lake said his personal opinion was that CGKA reneged on the original offer which would have ended the provisional use on July 12, which was then extended, and extended again to July 31. Pepi Gerald responded to Lake's comment by saying he had attended Port Commission meetings to make a request to open the Marina Beach to kiting but that it was the Port Commission that authorized the extension.

Pepi Gerald said he would like to see a positive gain as an outcome of the process and suggested looking at long term plans in the fall for all waterfront property with the needs of all users considered by looking at numbers, volume, impact, real estate and to get to these basic facts to make good decisions.

Jon Davies said he believes kites need to return to the sandbar as soon as it resurfaces and he would defer an opinion on the July 31 date to discussions with CGKA and CGWA to determine any date change. He said the best scenario would be to allow the most access in the geography available. He would recommend working toward opening the Marina Beach to allow launching and landing on the eastern half of the swim beach. Regarding the Event Site, Davies said he was not worried about expert kites but he was worried about those who thought they were experts.

**Motion:** Event Site to remain status quo but allow the July 31 date to expire and go back to pump and dry only, with the caveat that a Special Meeting of the Port of Hood River Commission be called if water levels are not conducive.

**Move:** Stirn

**Second:** Schock

**Discussion:** Lake said the motion does not consider congestion and safety. Frodel said an upcoming Canadian holiday, parking numbers, and opening the Marina to help with congestion should be factors to consider. Archbald said he was uncomfortable with the subjectivity of water levels. Stirn asked if a buoy line should be considered as part of

the action. McBride said he would recommend to the Port Commission to empower McElwee to reopen the Event Site 'flight deck' if the sandbar goes away. Gerald suggested sticking with the July 31 plan unless the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers report, available July 26, indicates untenable water levels.

**Vote: Aye:** Archbald, Bison, Rae, Frodel, Gerald, Schock, Stirn, Davies and McBride  
**Nay:** Lake (motion based on water levels and not based on crowds)

McElwee commented that a challenge would be communication with the users. It was his strong opinion, because of the water projections, to allow the provisional kite launching and landing to end July 31. Kite pumping and drying will still be allowed at the Event Site.

Commissioners Davies and McBride thanked the committee and guests for comments and commented that waterfront recreation master planning would be an agenda item at the next meeting in October.

The July 20, 2011 meeting was adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

*Prepared by Laurie Borton*