

**HMC  
Island Manager Report  
Board Meeting  
August 14, 2004**

**Summary**

**Administration**

- A reminder to all that the ferry goes into dry dock on September 20, and will go out of service late on Sunday, September 19.
- It is unknown at this point what small vessels, if any, will be available to take passengers to and from the island during the dry dock period.
- Several projects will probably be in progress in September and October: the ferry dry dock work, Peninsula Light Company submarine cable project (see below) and the replacement of the HMC water system reservoir.
- A relief captain, Paul Crow, and Captain Steve Wiggins have covered for Captain John Farris while he is recuperating from an injury. As of this Thursday Captain Farris has been released back to duty by his physician. HMC still needs to have at least one more relief captain available. Member Rich Urfer is in the process of upgrading his license and will possibly have his 100-ton license by late this year, and there has been interest expressed by two people in Gig Harbor, one of whom has a 100-ton license and one who will need to upgrade a 50-ton license.
- I would like to express my grateful appreciation to Beverly and John Bohren for making their island cabin available to the relief captain while he twice stayed overnight on the island.
- Thanks also to Mike Shettlesworth and Allen Moren, who modified a portable steel stairway that allowed Captain Farris to get up to the wheelhouse on the ferry while his shoulder healed. Thanks to Kevin Kircher for donating the stairway.
- For Board discussion: I am proposing that a permanent stairway be constructed on one end of the ferry cabin, as it was made clear while using the portable stairs that replacing the vertical ladder on at least one end would result in a much safer way to ascend and descend to and from the wheelhouse, especially in inclement weather. To that end, a marine architect visited the ferry on August 10<sup>th</sup> to work on a design that could be installed while the ferry is in dry dock.
- For Board discussion: a number of members have asked that the senior and disabled passes not expire concurrently with the end of the fiscal year.
- For Board discussion: a member has asked that the Board consider whether it could allow the Boosters to auction off a two-week period (during the ferry dry dock) during which the successful bidder could have use of one boat space at the small boat docks.

**Information items**

- After some telephone conversations following a request by the Island Manager to reduce the assessed value on one of the HMC-owned lots, the Pierce County Assessor's Office cut the value by 50%. This was accomplished without going through the lengthy, paper-intensive process of a formal appeal to the Board of Equalization.
- A former relief captain for HMC filed for unemployment recently, a situation that threatened to adversely affect our level of unemployment tax. A written appeal to the

State resulted in HMC being relieved of any tax penalties that would arise from this filing.

- Peninsula Light Company has informed HMC that they intend to attempt installation of the new submarine power cable from the mainland to Herron Island at some point this fall. They have a "window" of time during which the State Department of Ecology will allow the seabed trenching for the cable. PenLight believes that the "cut-over" from the old cable to the new will only entail a few hours of power outage to the island. More information will be disseminated as it is received.
- Due to the numerous heavy mailings that have been done this year we are using a large amount of postage. It may be necessary to move some funding into that budget item.
- A letter has been received from a renter who proposes that he pay entirely for a tennis court to be built near the children's playground.
- Pierce County began a burn ban on July 10. Only recreational fires in fire pits in approved campgrounds are allowed.

#### Emergency Preparedness/Fire Department

- Fire District 16 has taken delivery of four new fire engines, which are being outfitted with their complement of equipment. Replacement of the District's oldest pumper, the one on Herron Island, is expected soon.
- Fire Captain Chuck West recently experienced the loss of both his son and daughter-in-law in a mountain road accident. Diede Kerkes, who gave many volunteer hours training people on Herron Island in emergency response, has been ill and unable to work at Fire District Headquarters. For Board discussion: appropriate condolences to Captain West and recognition of Diede's service.

#### Land Use

- A new owner has been using the North Beach parking area to access his property, doing some damage to the ground surface around the horseshoe pit. He has been verbally advised to cease using the area, but because the access is so easy, I am recommending that some type of barrier, possibly a large log or logs, be placed at the HMC property line.
- A member wishes to make an offer to buy HMC's lot at 1212 West Herron Boulevard. A request to a local real estate agent has been made, asking for comparable sales prices.
- HMC owns a lot on North Fir, which appears to be saleable. A request for comps has also been made regarding this location.

#### Legal

- For Board discussion: a letter from a member has been received in which he states that water runoff he blames on HMC is an on-going problem. Inspection by the I.M. and a Board member indicates that the location of the residence at the bottom of a steep draw is the primary problem, and that HMC may have no responsibility.

#### Transportation

- The "navy brake" on the island ferry ramp structure (it keeps the ramp from descending into the water while the ferry is not there) failed in July. Repairs were very difficult and expensive and in fact could not be fully completed in the field. It will be necessary to send the electric motor and brake assembly to the shop in Seattle to partially rebuild it. Therefore a new brake had to be purchased (a spare motor is already available) at a cost

of over \$1800. Paired with the spare motor, it will give HMC the capability of quickly replacing a motor or brake if either should fail, and allow repairs to be done at the shop rather than getting an electrician and a mechanic out to the island.

- Since HMC obtained the correct type of ramp motors a couple of years ago there have been no motor failures. However, the brakes at each ramp were about nine years old and live in a marine environment that takes its toll on them.

### Water

- After the July routine water sample failed the laboratory testing for coliform bacteria, a second round of testing also failed. Due to the deteriorating reservoir and the summer heat, it has become necessary to manually chlorinate the reservoir on an as-needed basis. After starting the chlorination program, the five water samples tested in August were bacteria-free. A notice to all owners will go out in the August Beachcomber. The acquisition of a new and much larger reservoir is underway, and construction is expected to take place in October.
- The roofing surface on the well house is badly deteriorated and needs immediate replacement, prior to the rainy season.