

Island Manager Report

December 13, 2014

Administration:

Thanks to Karl Schafer for his help with pothole filling. And to Mike Gage, for rescuing from the outgoing tide our “no wake zone” buoy which had broken loose. (Now, a volunteer to get it reinstalled!)

Holiday Joy! The addition of Christmas lights at North Beach, and the ornament balls along island roads are a wonderful holiday gift from those who are providing them. The lights came from Terry Kraft, and the ornaments from “Anonymous”.

The meeting calendar on the HMC website is now being updated at the office and provided to the webmaster. If your committee is setting a meeting, please let the Island Manager know via email.

Another “button” has been added to the web page for information relating to the “Dolphin Replacement Project”. Currently it contains the 2010 original report and the 2014 update, with the 2010 report attached.

Will the person or persons who continue to vandalize the bulletin board on the west side of the Community Building please stop? And will someone please volunteer to mend it and perhaps arrange a different locking mechanism? If you are in need of a posted document, please contact the office.

Tree Trimming: We had a crew come out to the island to estimate the work to be done, and would like to get them working soon. It is clear from going around the island that branches in the HMC roadway easement have not been trimmed back for several years, other than the work done by Pen Light. As a consequence, several small trees have also grown up in the easement. We hope to take this work on a priority basis and avoid downed lines within the easement. HMC will only work within the roadway easement; if Members want to have additional work done between the easement and their homes, they will need to arrange for that work to be done at individual expense.

The chips will be dumped at two locations on the island, available on a first come, first serve basis: Nature Park parking lot area; and Community Building parking lot. We will notify Members with an email when the work is to begin and “let the chips fall where they may!”

Water Operations: Everything is quiet so far on the water system. Mention needs to be made that someone has been leaving the water dripping at North Beach. The hydrants at North Beach are frost free and will not freeze and burst. They should be left turned off.

Water Committee Report: Judy Greinke will report.

Fire Department Liaison: Information on burn bans is posted on the www.herronisland.org website almost as quickly as it is generated by Pierce County, so that is the most reliable place to check for information.

Land Use: The Key Peninsula Land Use Advisory Commission met and unanimously approved the addition of Contractor Yards as an allowable use in the R-10 zoned area. It was clear from the discussion that the members of the Commission believed the entire peninsula had a need for these services. The final amendments to the Comp Plan will go to the County Council in the spring. A period will follow in which new regulations will be drafted to guide the permitting of contractor yards.

Emergency Preparedness: Committee Report.

Parks: Committee Report from Tracy Anspach: The “no wake” buoy that broke free has been put in storage . Parks is looking for a volunteer to retrieve the other “no wake” buoy on the west side of the small boat docks .

Call Tracy Anspach if you can help. (360-8261) Tracy is hopeful to have a work party in February to repair loose float on dock and replace line and anchors on “no wake” buoys. Tracy would also like to schedule installation of fence posts around basketball court and swing. Tracy wishes you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Roads: The Committee did not meet. Some additional work has been done at South Herron on the drainage ditch repair, to redirect the flow of water. Potholes will be a priority after all the rain.

Rules: No outstanding complaints.

Herron Island Ferry:

Rich Urfer is an HMC Member who has served as a standby Captain and Deck Hand since 2004. He’s done a great job for all the Members in that time. He is retiring from the position as of December 15, 2014, but he’ll be working his last two days, December 14-15. Please extend your thanks to Rich for his service to all of us. We are proposing several small changes in the Ferry Access Policy. First, in response to a request, the language has been amended to provide that a respite provider for a caregiver may ride at Member rates, with proper documentation. The policy revision also eliminates the Form 13, formerly required for the boarding of trailers, clarifies the charging of guest passes by Members, and eliminates the use of checks when delinquent Members take advantage of the one-time visit provision of the policy.

An amended Ferry Access Policy is included for Board approval. The policy is amended from time to time in response to changing circumstances. This revision includes, under Ferry Fees, clarification as to how contractors may charge their passage; a provision that in-home respite care workers be allowed to ride at Member rates, with provider verification; language clarifying that Members riding as foot passengers may make a round trip on the immediate return run at no charge; and under Denial of Ferry Privileges, a requirement that delinquencies under \$100 be paid in cash when tendered to the ferry crew.

Recently, the ranks of standby captains have been diminished to only one, who is available only every other month. This past year we have made offers to, and partially trained, four standby captains. Only one finished training and now has recently resigned. The cycle of advertising, interviewing, backgrounding, and training is time consuming, costly and never-ending. Nevertheless, we should have two new candidates training soon, and hope that they will follow through after training. Standby deck hands are less of a problem to find and train. Currently we have two qualified, and are recruiting one more.

Ramp Painting:

No further activity this month. The permitting subconsultant has completed all of the paperwork and has submitted for permits. Sargent Engineers will keep us updated on the process. The next step will be the submittal of 60% complete plans, specifications and cost estimate by January 15, 2015. HMC will have until February 15, 2015 to review these plans and specifications.

Technology: Technical Committee Meeting Notes from Fred Fath, Committee Chairman:

“The Technical Committee met on November 13th welcoming one new member and losing two former members. It is unfortunate that harassment of volunteer committee members makes participation on committees uncomfortable. The main topic of discussion was the alternatives to our paper based ferry ticketing and recording system. We have looked at several methods in the past that seemed economically infeasible. With new technology and smart devices, it appears that more alternatives need to be investigated. One alternative that might be interesting is the use of the Good-To-Go system that is looking into the ticketing for the State Ferry System. Another alternative is the use of smart phones with a Web based application. We are also considering teaming with other private ferry systems on a ticketing system. All of this is very preliminary and centered on the feasibility of the technologies.

“We also discussed the ongoing work with the water billing system. The software to collect and process the water system data is up and running. The current effort centers on the import of the billing data into our accounting system Quickbooks.”

Legal Liaison: We currently have 15 delinquencies, seven of which are with the attorney for action, and three of which are making installment payments. One delinquency which was in collections has been paid in full. Delinquency rate of 3.9%. Last year at this time we had 16 delinquencies with 10 at collections. In 2012, the number was 26. Currently, HMC has 384 Assessable Units (down one from last month) and 397 Water customers.