



The Beachcomber



HMC Newsletter

November-December 2013



President's Message

We never seem to have enough time to get through our To-Do List of projects and when we knock one off the list another one or two seem to get added. But we keep moving forward with the hope and dream that someday our list shrinks to nothing. Just like our personal list of projects the Board also has a list and we are working on making it smaller. During this month's Board meeting we were able to finally deal with the road grading issue. We received some bids this last month and with the Roads Committee's recommendation we selected a contractor to grade the roads this fall. The object is to pull the gravel from the sides of the roads and re-crown the roads with this material. Along with crowning the roads the grading will eliminate the washboard effect that has appeared on some of the roads. There is some preparation work that the Roads Committee is doing before the grading is done. The water valves are being marked with blue paint so the grader sees them, foliage is being removed from the sides of the roads and sections of the roads are being identified where special precautions will have to be taken. If you are on the island the Roads Committee could use your help by removing the leaves from the road in front of your property. Leaves are not good material to be graded into the roads as they make for a slippery mess when wet and help in preventing the gravel from compacting tight. Any help in removing leaves will speed the grading process up, make for a better job and help your Road Committee and other volunteers.

Another topic that we are moving forward on is the ferry ramp painting. Besides cosmetic appearance the painting is necessary to maintain the structural integrity of the ramps. Without paint rust sets into the welds and joints of the ramps and this weakens the stress points. If this occurs, the weight limits of the ramps would have to be reduced, our insurance cost goes up, and the repair bill increases. We have been postponing this preventive maintenance to the point now that our insurance carrier is pushing this issue. The Board is asking for volunteers to form a committee to help in evaluating bids and recommendations. We need people with contract bidding experience, environmental experience, structural engineering experience, maintenance experience and people with common sense. If you are interested please email Claudia. Due to the length of the permitting process we need to begin now.

North Beach Park has some erosion caused by last winter's king tides. After considerable paperwork, time and many telephone calls to Pierce County we found out that we need permits to repair the damage. An estimated cost for the permits is \$5,000. It's been suggested that natural material such as driftwood may reduce the erosion without HMC adding structural material. The Board has elected to try this approach first and reevaluate this issue in the spring. This approach will not cost us any money right now. If it does not work we will be no worse off than we are right now in the spring in regards to the funds that will be needed to correct the situation.

Also the Board has moved forward with a plan to close the section of South Herron Road that is no longer usable for vehicle traffic. This section of the road has long been unmaintained and will be converted into a walking trail for now. With the help of the Roads and Park Committees the Board will be looking at alternative ideas that have been presented to deal with this issue. For now the walking trail will be closed off to bikers, ATVs, golf carts and other motorized vehicles. This section of the old road has become too dangerous to risk allowing children to continue to drive or ride on it.

In October the Board sent out a ballot regarding the issue of contiguous lots. After the ballot was mailed one of our Members found a possible error in the legal wording of the ballot. After many emails and legal advice the error was verified so the Board agreed not to move forward with a ballot that served no legal purpose.

This ballot also brought forth another discussion regarding the way the assessments are computed. Even though the ballot did not address the way assessments are calculated Members at the meeting wanted the Board to consider various alternatives to our current equation. During the October Board Meeting Members suggestions ranged from using assessed property values by the County, square footage, number of owned lots and street footage to calculate a Members assessment. At the October Board Meeting the Board stated that it would research the past history of our

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President's Message
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assessments before diving into a new project. During this last month former Board Presidents Nick Huff and Fred Faith both wrote articles regarding our history with assessment calculations. Both articles are included in this Beachcomber and are very interesting reading. Also several court cases have been found from across the country regarding Home Owners Associations (HOAs) attempting to change the method that is used to compute assessments. The Board also found a court case from 1987 that involved HMC regarding this issue of changing the calculation. The 1987 court case reflects current rulings that basically say you cannot change your basic formula without 100% agreement by the total Membership. During the November Board Meeting the Members in attendance asked the Board to check our legal options on this

issue. The Board has agreed to check out the current legal standing in regards to changing our basic formula. From the HMC research it was uncovered that this issue surfaced in 1982, 1987, 1999, 2005 and now. Since laws and court rulings are ever changing we shall see what the legal standing is now.

I apologize for the long message but there was a lot that has happen since the October meeting. Just two final things: t first is a reminder that there is no December Beachcomber. The second is to have a very safe and enjoyable upcoming holiday, and if you know someone that is alone this year please stop by or invite them over. A visit goes a long way in cheering up someone who may not have family close by.

Gary Wanzong, President
HMC Management Board of Directors

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Important Phone Numbers**Island Manager**

Claudia Ellsworth (253) 884-9350

HMC Board of Directors

Gary Wanzong, President/Co-Treasurer (253) 884-9350
 Pat Zazzo, Vice-President (253) 884-6719
 Sherri Anderson, Secretary/Co-Treasurer (253) 884-3505
 Dianne DeGood, Member-at-Large (316) 794-8391(H)
 (316) 641-4014(C)
 Janet Podell, Member-at-Large (253) 884-1171

Additional Contacts

Charles Smith, Water Repair (206) 707-4645
 Judy Greinke, Water Committee Chair (253) 857-5463
 G. Wanzong/S. Anderson, Finance Comm. (253) 884-9350
 Jack Wells, Roads Committee Chair (253) 884-0850
 Alan DeGood, Rules Committee Chair (253) 884-9350
 T. Anspach/T. Chilson, Parks Co-Chairs (253) 588-1921
 Mike Shettlesworth, Emergency Prep. Chair (253) 884-6919
 Merry Kogut, Land Use Chair (253) 884-9350
 Fred Fath, Technology Chair (206) 246-7016
 Carolyn Snyder, Office Manager (253) 884-9350
 Ken Freeman, Beachcomber/Webmaster (231) 544-2456

**Herron Island Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday
 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. The office is CLOSED Monday,
 Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday, and after 2:00 PM on Fri-
 days before Board meetings.**

Office Phone: (253) 884-9350
 Office Fax: (253) 884-5047

Website: <http://www.herronisland.org>

Office email: Office@herronisland.org
 HMC Water email: HMCWater@herronisland.org
 Manager email: HMCManager@herronisland.org
 Beachcomber email: beachcomber@herronisland.org
 Parks email: HMC Parks@herronisland.org
 Member Input to Board: MemberInput@herronisland.org

Emergency 911

Ferry Cell phone (253) 691-1457

(Cell phone to be used for scheduling heavy loads, big vehicles or having something in tow, and for information regarding ferry services.)

Ferry Business

- Call ahead if you are planning to use the ferry for a trailer, boat, or large vehicle!
- Only those guests with valid passes will be allowed on the ferry.
- Plan your arrival at the dock at least 5 minutes before the scheduled time of departure.
- Walks-ons are not to be on the dock or ramp when cars are being loaded. Watch crew for permission to board.
- Only service and delivery people may charge fares.

WE HAVE EXPERIENCED GUESTS AND SERVICE PEOPLE EXPECTING TO COME OVER TO THE ISLAND WITHOUT GUEST PASSES. THIS VIOLATES THE ACCESS POLICY THAT WAS PUT IN PLACE FOR ALL OF OUR SECURITY. PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR GUEST HAS A VALID GUEST PASS SIGNED BY YOU TO ENSURE THEY ARE ABLE TO RIDE THE FERRY. BLANK GUEST PASSES ARE AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS AT THE OFFICE, BY MAIL, AND ON THE FERRY.

Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal law this institution is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-2372 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).

Beachcomber news items must be submitted by 5:00 PM on the Wednesday after the monthly Board meeting on the second Saturday of the month. Items **MUST** be emailed in electronic format to beachcomber@herronisland.org. Include your name and phone number in case any questions arise. Paid advertisements are to be arranged with the HMC office **PRIOR TO PUBLICATION.**

Island Manager Report November 9, 2013

Administration:

Much of this past month has been consumed by records management, recruiting, screening and interviewing job candidates, and administrative work on permit issues. The Roads, Water and Land Use committees have been hard at work, and HMC is fortunate to have such terrific volunteers.

Due to staff out of office commitments, and the coming holiday, the HMC Office will be closed Friday, November 15, and Thanksgiving Day, November 28, and the day following, Friday, November 29.

Water Operations: Charles Smith has been hard at work developing a list of project that need to be undertaken at the pump station, over time. These include making room for road material storage and creating a dry space for the water manager to work.

Judy Greinke and I met with NWS to discuss implementation of the cross connection control program. We forwarded to NWS a list of those 12 or so properties which may have assemblies requiring backflow control. NWS will then contact these owners to confirm the device and obtain a current certification, or advise the owners how to obtain certification. This is done at the owner's expense. We have a handful of owners who have not yet responded and sent them a letter which explains the need to return the survey form to HMC or risk water shutoff, as required by DoH regulations.

We have also found that a water meter was moved, without HMC knowledge, at an address on East Herron. We will probably inquire of the owner if they did this work, and advise them by letter that only HMC should work with the meters. Tampering with meters or components of a water system is a punishable criminal offense.

So far we have been unable to dispose of the water parts inventory to WWSC, and are working on an alternative proposal. If anyone knows of a plumbing or construction company that might be interested in the inventory, please have them get in touch with HMC.

Fred Fath continues to assist with the meter reading program implementation and developing water records. Much appreciated!

Water Committee Report: Judy Greinke, chairman, will report. The committee is exploring whether water billing could be done electronically and, if so, what the postage, printing and mailing savings would be to HMC.

Water System Project: The Pierce County inspector has made his final visit and said "ok" to the stockpile removal and trench repairs. Once we deliver to him the as builts and the engineer's report, we should have closure on the permit.

Bruce Whittle, of USDA, will come out to the island November 13th which should be quite straightforward, but it is a required visit.

Fire Department Liaison: Several islanders attended the Fire Department presentation on October 19, but only one person submitted a timely application. The time and training required is probably a big disincentive for most people, and so, we will see what the Survey & Rating Bureau review brings us next year.

FD #16 has informed us that they are discontinuing the pagers currently in use by the crew as of December 31, 2013 and converting to text message alert for the fire fighters. Assuming that the pager is a more certain alert system – and HMC does not provide cell phones for employees-- we will need to investigate acquiring two pagers for our crew members, although the Fire Department isn't purchasing pagers until March.

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Island Manager Report
(Continued from Page 4)

Land Use: Committee Report included in Board packet. The committee completed an island-wide survey of trailers and motor homes on private property in response to a request of the Board. The underlying concern is the health and environmental impact of disposal of gray water from any occupied trailer.

Emergency Preparedness: Committee Report.

Parks: No committee report. The IM met with Pierce County planning staff regarding what permits, if any, would be required to make “landscape” improvements along the east side of North Beach, particularly in the area which appears to be eroding. Permit requirements can range from prohibitive to permissive, and more exploration needs to be done before a decision can be reached.

Roads: Committee Report. Two contractors came to the island and toured in order to provide estimates. Thanks to Jack Wells and Steve Kramer for guiding them around. Morrison Gravel, of Port Orchard, submitted the low bid. Based on the experience and approach offered by that company, we are recommending that the Board approve grading by Morrison Gravel in the amount of \$3,506.75. Grading will be scheduled as soon as the weather permits, in order to groom the roads for winter.

The alignment project at South Herron/East Madrona is underway and should result in drainage and other improvements. Steve Kramer and Jack Wells will be doing the work. Expect to see a new stop sign in that area when the work is done.

With the road improvements which occurred at the foot of East Herron and Madrona Lane, there's been considerable discussion about formal closure of the unmaintained road. Common understanding seems to be that a previous Board took action to declare those unmaintained areas as such at some time in the past. We are recommending that the Board take a formal action to close the unmaintained area at the east end of South Herron, and the second area on Fir Lane. Following Board action, these areas will be marked “closed to vehicles” and if possible, barriers will be added.

Rules: No further complaints.

Herron Island Ferry: With John Farris' assistance, we interviewed three candidates for standby captains and are prepared to make offers to two of them, assuming that everything checks out. This should provide us with four standby captains.

Bruce Mowell, a resident of Lakebay, completed his training as standby deck hand, which gives us now two standby deck hands.

Legal Liaison: We currently have 17 delinquencies, of which 10 are with the attorney for action. Delinquency rate of 4.4%. Last year at this time we had 12. Currently, HMC has 389 Assessable Units and 397 Water customers..

B.O.O.S.T.E.R.S.

Band of Obviously Super, Terrifically Enthusiast Recreation Supporters

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING DINNER EVENT - 2013

Huge thanks to everyone who came, supported, and enjoyed the festive fall evening with all our Herron Island friends. Delicious food along with good community-spirited fun highlighted the evening. Free "Bingo Games" with prizes, the "Basket Raffle" with exciting gifts, and the "Mini Auction" of very special Herron Island art pieces were all donated by Boosters and at the end of the evening were taken home by some lucky ticket holders.

Are you aware that 100% of all proceeds taken in at BOOSTERS Events are used to help beautify and improve Herron Island facilities and environment? Financial decisions for projects and events are voted on by BOOSTERS Members at BOOSTERS Meetings. Plan to become a part of this valuable resource for Herron Island and attend our next BOOSTERS Meeting and potluck on Saturday evening February 8, 2014.



Emergency Preparedness Meeting

There will be an Emergency Preparedness meeting at the Community Building on Saturday, December 14 at 12:30 PM. We will be looking at the emergency supply list and suggest additional ones. Contact persons are Mike Shettlesworth 253-884-6919 and Pat Zazzo 253-882-6719.



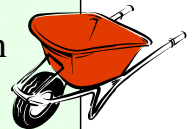
Holiday Office Closures

The HMC office will be closed for the holidays, Thursday November 28 and Friday, November 29th, and again December 24th.



HMC Volunteers - An Update

For most of this year we have been keeping track of volunteer hours generously donated by Members towards the maintenance, repair and update of many of our island assets. Everything from cleaning up road debris to preparing mailings; from installing and uninstalling our small boat docks, to operating the water truck. (Not forgetting the caring Members who prepare the food for our hard working volunteers.) And there are many, many other tasks that are far too numerous to mention in this space.



As of this Beachcomber Members have contributed 864 volunteer hours which, when converted to dollar value equals approximately \$18,500 or \$47.60 per Member. This is very significant since it represents money that would have been added to your annual assessment if HMC had to contract out for this work. We cannot underestimate the value of our wonderful volunteers. And this is proof positive.

We have so many skilled, talented and professional people on Herron Island. And volunteer opportunities abound. Please consider volunteering your time to help us control island expenditures and keep our assessments lower. Contact the office at office@herronisland.org to find out how you can help. And a great big **THANK YOU** goes out to those volunteers who helped this year to keep our island the wonderful place that it is for all.



From the desk of Patricia Haenen Jones and Clarence Jones

A heartfelt thank you to Michael Shettlesworth and Karen Dorans for their amazing quick response to our pet emergency during Dry Dock!

On Friday 20 September 2013 our Welsh Pembroke Corgi (Toby) suddenly displayed a swollen left jaw with white pustules and lethargy. A call to the local Vet requested for Toby to be transported to the Animal Emergency Hospital. Within 10 minutes of calling Michael Shettlesworth, a boat ride with Karen Dorans was provided with a car ready on the mainland to take us to the emergency room!

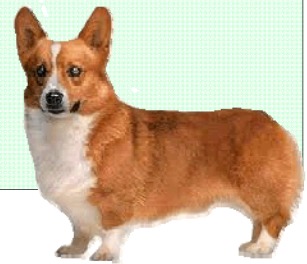
Diagnosis: spider bite!

After a local anesthesia, Toby was treated and sent home (after dire promises of round the clock care with two antibiotics and antibacterial compresses to be applied every 12 hours).

A return boat trip once again thanks to Karen Dorans' assistance saw us safely home back to the island despite stormy weather within a few hours! (Thanks for that thoughtful towel Karen!!)

End of story Folks!
Toby is on the mend!
Beware of spiders!

Sincere thanks again to two outstanding islanders for their kindness!



Package Delivery



If you order packages to be delivered to the mainland terminal, please track their delivery so you can be available to pick them up or make other arrangements. It is not the responsibility of the ferry crew.

No Beachcomber in December

The Beachcomber is published nine times per year. There will be no issues in October, December, or February.

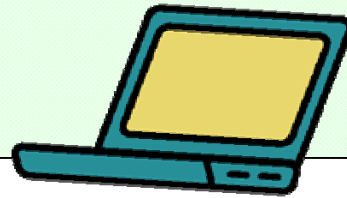


HERRON ISLAND PAPERLESS BILLING

HMC and the Herron Island Water Department are planning a pilot program for Paperless Billing. Our goal is to save some of the costs associated with mailing every bill. For those who sign up, the next HMC and HI Water Bills will be sent out via email and you will not receive a bill in the mail. At that point you can decide how you want to pay your bill, either in person, by mail or by "Bill Pay" through your bank. You just have to make sure your payment reaches the HMC office by the deadline to avoid a late charge.

However, those who do not have email or wish to continue receiving their bills via regular mail will still have their bills mailed to them. This is only for those who wish to participate in the Pilot program.

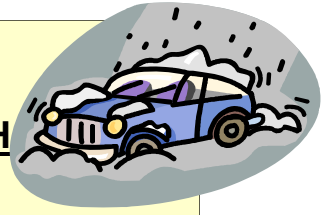
If you are interested in participating, please send your name and member number to: office@herronisland.org.



Are You on the List?

HMC now has 331 Member email addresses on the notification list. If you want to receive updates about the water project, get notice of the online Beachcomber, or get the latest on windstorms, power outages, water line breakages, or other news, please send an email to office@herronisland.org and request that your email address be added. To be used for HMC purposes only.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TIP OF THE MONTH **STRANDED IN A BLIZZARD**



Our weather forecasters do their very best to alert us to possible extreme weather conditions. However, sudden unexpected storms do occur. If a blizzard overtakes, you the following tips can save your life and the lives of those traveling with you.

KEEP THESE ITEMS IN YOUR CAR IN WINTER:

Shovel, windshield scraper, battery powered radio, flashlight, extra batteries including cell phone power source, water, snack food, mittens, hat, blanket, tow chain or rope, tire chains, bag of road salt/sand/kitty litter, a fluorescent distress flag, booster cables, road maps, emergency flares, tarp/sheet, and walking shoes.

- Pull off the highway. Set your hazard lights to “flashing” and hang a distress flag from the window or antenna.
- Remain in your vehicle where rescuers are most likely to find you. Do not set out on foot unless you can see a nearby building where you know you can take shelter. Be careful: Distances are distorted by blowing snow. A building may seem close but be too far to walk to in deep snow.
- Run the engine and heater about ten minutes each hour to keep warm. While you run the engine, open a window slightly for ventilation. This will protect you from possible carbon monoxide poisoning. Periodically clear away snow from the exhaust pipe.
- Exercise to maintain body heat, but avoid overexertion. In extreme cold, use road maps, seat covers and floor mats for insulation. Huddle with passengers and use your coat for a blanket.
- Take turns sleeping. One person should be awake at all times to look out for rescue crews.
- Be careful not to exhaust battery power. Balance electrical energy needs - the use of lights, heat and radio – with supply.
- Turn on the inside dome light at night so work crews can see you.
- If stranded in a remote rural or wilderness area, spread a large cloth or tarp over the snow to attract attention of rescue personnel who may be surveying the area by airplane.

For information about the Herron Island **Emergency Preparedness Committee** call **Mike Shettlesworth 884-6919** or **Pat Zazzo 882-6719**

Website Photos

If you have any photos from island activities that you would like to share on our website, please send them to webmaster@herronisland.org.



Board Member Email Addresses

HMCGaryWanzong@herronisland.org

HMCPatZazzo@herronisland.org

HMCSherriAnderson@herronisland.org

HMCDianneDeGood@herronisland.org

HMCJanetPodell@herronisland.org

Please use these email addresses for all future communications to Board Members. They can be accessed on our website (herronisland.org) under the HMC Board tab.



Reminder

Requests for reimbursement must be accompanied by a receipt and received by the office by the Thursday before the Board Meeting to be included in the list of bills to be approved by the Board. Failure to get your bill in on time will result in a delay in payment until the following month.

Welcome, New Islanders!

HMC welcomes the following new Members to Herron Island:

- Frank & Dana Harrison





RESIDENTIAL FIRE PIT ETIQUETTE

While having an outdoor campfire is wonderful, legal, and fun, we need to remember that our “good times” may be a nuisance and, in some cases, a hazard to our neighbors. Here are some simple suggestions so that you can be a “good neighbor” while enjoying your fire pit.

- Burn only dry firewood. Generate as little smoke as possible.
- Check the wind direction.
- Notify your neighbors in advance.
- Better yet ... invite your neighbor.
- Be sensitive to the neighbor who may have asthma or other breathing difficulties.
- Even a “hot” fire emits the smell of smoke so consider how frequently you have a fire.
- Remember to refrain from loud voices, loud music, etc. between the hours of 10 pm and 8 am.

Per the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, it’s always illegal to smoke out your neighbors. If they complain, you are required to put the fire out immediately.

Additionally

- Any outdoor fire must be continuously attended. Abandoning a fire could result in heavy fines and is an HMC rule violation.
- Burning of trash is never allowed.

For more details of island and government burning regulations, please check out the Burn Rules section of our website at www.herronisland.org.

Bottom-Line

Please follow the rules, never leave a fire unattended and be courteous to your neighbors.

WINTER FERRY SCHEDULE (10/1 through 3/31)

MON		TUE		WED		THUR		FRI		SAT		SUN	
IS.	ML.	IS.	ML.	IS.	ML.	IS.	ML.	IS.	ML.	IS.	ML.	IS.	ML.
6:15	7:00	6:15	7:00	6:15	7:00	6:15	7:00	6:15	7:00				
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Thanksgiving and
New Years:

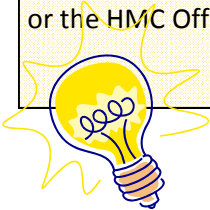
Lv. Island 8:30, 11:30, 6:30
Lv. Mainland 9:00, 12:00, 7:00

Christmas: Lv. Island 8:30, 6:30
Lv. Mainland 9:00, 7:00

Concerns or Ideas

All Members are invited to voice their concerns or ideas by using the Member Input email address, contacting the Board Members or the HMC Office:

MemberInput@herronisland.org

**Tide Tables**

Plots of the monthly tide tables are available on our website (herronisland.org). The plots are for nearby McMicken Island, which is the NOAA data point closest to Herron Island.





ATTENTION ALL HERRON ISLANDERS

Remember the BOOSTERS Directory of days gone by? A BOOSTERS member has generously offered to head up a project to create a new Island directory. We must get written permission for each name listed in our directory, so if you would like to be listed please send the following information to Roberta Latimer at the email address shown below. Roberta will compile all the names and then the BOOSTERS will publish the information in a booklet format.

NAME: _____
ISLAND ADDRESS: _____
MAILING ADDRESS: _____
EMAIL ADDRESS; _____
PHONE NUMBERS: _____

If you would like to advertise in our phone book directory, please send your information along with \$20 payable to HI BOOSTERS so it can be included in the directory.

SEND ALL INFORMATION TO: Roberta Latimer at: candrlatimer@gmail.com

Herron Island Assessment History

By Fred Fath

When the Herron Island Home Owner Association was first incorporated called the Herron Island Maintenance Corporation, the funding for the Corporation was based on assessments from each member. A member was defined as an entity that owned property on the Island. A member would then pay their portion of the Island expenses (ferry, roads, water, parks, and administration) based on the assumption that each member benefited from the shared use of the Island assets. The member definition was not associated with any lot or multiple lots but only ownership of at least one lot.

This assessment approach was fine until the membership started to decline due to some members buying multiple lots for speculation and resale. Members that acquired multiple contiguous lots in order to create a buildable parcel were not viewed as speculators or a significant cause of the decline in member assessments. This was a result of the fact that the lots were platted when the county building codes were essentially non-restrictive. The lots were then thought of as vacation parcels sufficient for small cabins and camping. Over time, the county building codes became more restrictive for both health and environmental reasons with the result that many lots did not have sufficient size to support a single family residence. Also, many members became full time residents with larger homes.

When the state laws were changed and the Island Association had to re-incorporate (the time we had to change our name to HMC Management), the membership desired to adjust the assessment approach in the By-Laws to make speculators pay assessments for multiple building sites. We tried to do this by not drastically changing the assessments based on members who benefit from the Island resources. We looked at assessments based on parcel value, parcel size, or parcel quality but all these did not support the initial rationale that assessments should be based on members use of Island resources. Our attorneys handling the re-incorporation advised we consider building units as a basis with members defined as an owner of a single building unit rather than just owning any property. This approach stayed with the concept of a member assessment but eliminated the speculation aspect which hurt all other members. By going with the single building unit per member and allowing multiple lots to create a building unit to meet the new county building codes, the decline in membership was slowed. The approach still met the objective that assessments were based on members and their benefit from Island resources which do not change based on the value of their building units. This approach based on assessable units was then incorporated into the by-laws and voted on by the membership. This is where the voting process was also changed to the assessable unit basis so members that owned multiple assessable units got one vote per assessable unit.

This assessable unit approach to member assessments worked but many members still felt that some members were benefiting a lot more than others from the use of Island resources. The first issue to be addressed was the use of the ferry. While all members got benefit from having a ferry and a schedule, members that only occasionally visited the Island felt that those who used the ferry often were getting more benefit and being subsidized by the infrequent users. To address this issue, the Board proposed a user fee to offset the assessments and make the assessments more equitable. The original approach to ferry user fees was based on a 60/40 split of ferry expenses with 60% of ferry expense paid from member assessments and 40% based on user fees. This split was decided on by realizing that every member benefited from having the ferry and that those who decided to use the ferry should not be overly penalized. The membership voted on this ap-

proach and it became part of the updated by-laws. Over the years, the ferry user fees have increased but have covered less than the original 40% set as the target. The by-laws on ferry user fees never set the actual split of expenses between assessments and user fees.

When the new water system was built, the same issue with user fees is raised. Like the ferry user fees, all members benefit from have a water system on the Island. The mechanism to support the water system should then be based on some split of expense covering between assessments (base meter fee) and user fees for those who benefit more through usage. Determining this split is a task that needs to be undertaken with a lot of member input.

My feelings on new changes to the assessment approach should take into account our history and stay with the member basis. By staying with the member basis, we mostly avoid legal challenges and changes significantly different from those under which our Island Association was incorporated. Like the last time, one may adjust the definition of assessable building unit but even this is risky.

Fred Fath
Past HMC Management Board President
November 7, 2013

October 19, 2013

RE: Gary Wanzong's email referring to changing the method of assessments

HMC Board of Directors, Island Manager & Beachcomber Editor

- This has already been done
- A committee was developed
- Membership input was solicited
- Various methods were looked at (value, square footage, waterfront, equal assessments)
- Values were assigned based on certain criteria—was it fair, equitable legal, acceptable

Value—1—You would penalize property owners for value improvement based on County Evaluations which vary from year to year. 2—Square footage is totally unreasonable and not necessarily related to value. 3—You have fixed income people living on the island with this being their only home. 4—There are no two properties valued the same. 5— Most members didn't think it was fair and it would be difficult to administer.

The definition of "equitable" is characterized by just and right. Homeowner fees must be fair, reasonable and equitably assessed to all its members.

Legal—The current method of assessment was the direct result of working closely with the HMC attorney. Under his legal guidance the existing method was developed having looked into RCW, WAC. State and County laws governing homeowner associations and listening to member's input. Any assessment method must be looked at from the legal aspect—which was done in depth over many, many months. **The big question was:** For equal treatment and benefits, can you legally charge more to some, and if you do that, what additional benefits would those person derive. Because the County taxes by home value, does not give a green light to homeowners associations to do the same.

Acceptable—We paid a goodly amount of money in attorney fees, and spent many hundreds of volunteer hours coming to the current solution for assessing homeowner dues. When the current method was developed, it was voted on by the members and passed, which was important and necessary.

There are just a few of numerous things that must be considered when contemplating changing or revisiting this issue. Please go back in the records and look at the Board minutes, attorney correspondence, ballots and Beachcombers all having to do with how HMC reached the conclusion this was the best and most fair way to assess. I am keenly aware that money doesn't go as far as it use to and many properties are of low value and are impacted by the current assessment; but for many this is an investment in recreational property, and as such has little to no value return on their money (e.g. timeshares, motor homes, travel trailers, etc.) Most of thee owners if not all, have homes off island. When HMC put in the new water lines, you took the total cost divided by the total membership and came up with a figure—it was fair and equitable and easier way to do it.

In closing, I would just like to re-emphasize that we have already spent a good deal of time and money on this issue. I would hate to think it was all for nothing and this issue will be revisited time and time again ad nausea. All the records from our last go round should still be in the office.

Please read this at the Board meeting and post it in the Beachcomber.
Thank you. Nick and Barbara Huff

Herron Island Real Estate

The Heron Team wish each of you and your families a very Happy Thanksgiving and a special Merry Christmas. 2013 went by so quickly. We thank you for your support and also the new families that have chosen to make Herron Island their place to enjoy. Welcome to the "Jewel of the South Sound."

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