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HARBOUR AUTHORITIES FORUM

APRIL 2007 — VOLUME 13, NO. 1

A DECADE OF PROGRESS

STANDING (LEFT TO RIGHT): BEN MABBERLEY, RICK HILL, TOM FORGE ACCEPTING ON BEHALF OF LINDA FRANZ, HILTJE BINNER, JIM BROWN ACCEPTING ON BEHALF OF NEIL GUSTAFSON, ARNOLD WALTER. SEATED (LEFT TO RIGHT): DIANA PRYDE REPRESENTING THE PENDER HA, JAMES BOLAND, JANET ROOKE REPRESENTING BART TERWIEL AND THE SALT SPRING HA.

COURTESY OF NANAIMO PORT AUTHORITY

In April 1997, Pacific region Harbour Authority (HA) managers, directors and Small Craft Harbours (SCH) representatives met to discuss the creation of an association of Harbour Authorities in British Columbia (BC). The newly formed association met that October to decide its mandate. The following February, the association celebrated its incorporation at the very first Harbour Authority Association of British Columbia (HAABC) conference.

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Since then, the HAABC has held a conference every year to strengthen the association and increase communication and education for all members. This year's conference, marking the HAABC's 10th anniversary, was recently hosted by the Nanaimo Port Authority on Vancouver Island. The three-day event was well attended—over 94 delegates from BC harbours and many SCH representatives.

In recognition of the contributions and achievements of HAs over the past decade, James Boland, Regional Director, Small Craft Harbours, Pacific Region, presented eight SCH HA Awards of Excellence. Individual Commitment Awards were presented to Hiltje Binner (North Island), Linda Franz (Mid Island), Ben Mabberley (South Island), Rick Hill (North Coast), Neil Gustafson (Sunshine Coast) and Arnold Walter (Lower Mainland). The HA Achievement Award went to Pender HA and Salt Spring Island HA took home the HA Award for Environmental Stewardship. Linda Franz (Campbell River HA) also received a Lifetime Membership Award from the HAABC for her role in the association, as did John Hayes (Gibsons HA). Congratulations to all!

The highly entertaining Mario Govorchin from the Justice Institute presented an outstanding workshop on conflict resolution. Alisdair Smith delivered an informative workshop on board governance and risk management. These presentations are summarized on pages 4 and 2, respectively.

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A decade of progress – Continued from page 1

Jim Allen, an electrical technician at Public Works and Government Services Canada specializing in inspecting, designing and managing marine electrical systems, gave an "electrifying" workshop.

Nick Russo and Iona To from Environment Canada updated participants on the regulations concerning hull maintenance; Hamish Murray (Meteorological Service of Canada) spoke about changes to weather forecasting; Andrew Pitcher of Nanaimo Port Authority and representatives of the Coastal Watch program covered harbour security; and Shelly Chapelski from the law firm of Bromley Chapelski gave a lively presentation on marine law. Of course, the ever-popular Ports of Call series on West Coast ports was also presented throughout the conference.

Representing the National Harbour Authority Advisory Committee, Ben Mabberley updated participants on one of the year's most significant projects: the formation of the Harbour Authority Corporation in response to the need for Directors' and Officers' insurance and Bodily Injury insurance. Through the Corporation, HAs can access more affordable rates than by going solo. Ben played an important part in getting this project up and running, and would be happy to answer any questions. Feel free to contact him at (250) 539-5263 or Luc Legresley at apqqha@hotmail.com. ✦

Courtesy of Nanaimo Port Authority

From the Editor

Once again, it is with great pleasure that I publish the Harbour Authority Forum, which I have found to be a great source of inspiration.

Harbour Authority Forum is published twice a year by Small Craft Harbours as a communication tool to exchange information and ideas, share best practices, celebrate successes.

The next edition will be in November 2007, please do not hesitate to send us your ideas and article suggestions. Let us know what is happening in your Harbour Authority as well as challenges that relate to it. This is a great opportunity to share your success stories with your peers!

If you have comments or suggestions, you can contact us by e-mail at **schinfo@dfo-mpo.gc.ca**, by phone at (613) 993-0999 or by fax at (613) 990-1866.

Happy reading! *Denise Lapratte*

All "Star" Boards

Separating the roles and responsibilities of the Board from those of the Harbour Manager and employees/volunteers will help to ensure your HA runs as efficiently and effectively as possible. To clarify them, try following these guidelines…

The Board

- The Board sits in the crow's nest and watches for icebergs (it *leads* but does not *manage*);
- The Board is a decision-making body;
- The Board speaks with one voice or not at all (the Chair is usually the spokesperson);
- The Board does not have day-to-day responsibilities;
- The Board is a group of people working through conflict together, not individuals fighting each other.

The Harbour Manager

- The Harbour Manager is on the bridge and keeps his hands on the wheel (he *manages* but does not *lead*);

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Have computer... will communicate!

"This couldn't have come at a better time," laughs Tim Adamson, Harbour Manager at Dauphin River HA, Manitoba, speaking about the computer now sitting in his home office. "It's going to make our work so much easier. It's been hard to drive the 300-and-some kilometres to Winnipeg to exchange paperwork with SCH."

"Well, I'll be the one actually using it," continues Tim's wife, Helen, who is also the HA's secretary. "We'll be able to do newsletters, fliers, our five-year plan, our budget and finally, *finally*, have access to the web. It's great!"

Why the excitement about a computer?

Because high-speed internet finally came to Dauphin River, a community of some 160 souls and almost as many fishing licences in northern Manitoba, giving it a window to the world. Because, until this past January, the only available computer belonged to someone in the community so Helen only asked when she desperately had to. And because this one came fully loaded and free, courtesy of the SCH Computer Loan Program, the price was just right for the HA.

"See," says Tim. "I said the timing was perfect!"

The SCH Computer Loan Program redistributes unused DFO computers to HAs that are either remote or cannot afford to buy one so that they can better communicate with each other, the regional offices and Ottawa. Trish Driedger, Program Development Officer at SCH's Central and Arctic region office in Winnipeg, heard about the Program and spread the word.

"I knew that a number of HAs in our area didn't have computers," she says. "Tim stopped by with some paperwork and an application, and he took home a computer that same day. It was strictly on a first come, first served basis."

"We're still in the process of getting hooked up," says Tim. "We have the tower but not the receiver yet. And we're signing up with an internet service provider. But I'm looking forward to downloading information from the SCH website. These computers are going to people who really need them It's a wonderful program and certainly, here in Dauphin River, we want to thank SCH in Ottawa because that's where the computer came from." ✦

Risk? What risk?

What are the odds of a damaged float pitching somebody headlong into the water? Or of a computer virus sending confidential information all over the world? Nobody knows… so the best you can do is be prepared. You owe it to yourself, your colleagues, the public and your HA.

Risk management is the process of preparing for the unknown. It is easier than you think.

Step 1: Ask the people around you, "What could go wrong? How much would it cost to fix?" Check your safety records for incidents that show weaknesses. Consider risks to people, property, income…

Step 2: Evaluate the risks. Is the risk likely or less likely to happen? How, and how much, will the HA suffer?

Step 3: Prioritize the risks by taking into account the level of harm and the likelihood that it may happen. That will help you know where to start.

Step 4: Control risk in one of these four ways:

- STOP the activity and avoid the risk altogether;
- CHANGE the activity or MODIFY the property to minimize the risk;
- TRANSFER the liability through waivers, contracts, etc.; or
- ACCEPT the risk, minimize harm and prepare for the consequences.

Step 5: Act on the decision in Step 4:

- Be consistent (for example, make sure the risk is removed from all your programs);
- Be committed (change does not happen overnight. You will have to follow through); and
- Make sure people know.

Step 6: Review and monitor. Priorities change. Review your plans regularly and adapt them to meet new situations.

Here are some other ideas to help you out.

Start a Risk Management Committee

- The committee's mandate can include recommending and monitoring risk management strategies, and prioritizing risks.

Educate and inform

- Make sure everyone has access to training and information on how to prevent and manage risk.

Share information

- Ask similar organizations for examples of policies and procedures, and share your own.

Appreciate risk spotting

- Make it easy for employees and volunteers to report risks.

Stay current

- Incorporate changes to laws, by-laws and regulatory policies into your risk management strategy.

This article is based on a fact sheet developed by SCH Pacific Region and Volunteer Vancouver on risk management and board responsibilities. SCH Pacific has graciously agreed to share it with other regions. Call Stacee Martin at (604) 666-1146 for your electronic or paper copy. ✦

All "Star" Boards – Continued from page 2

- The Harbour Manager—and only the Harbour Manager!—reports to the Board, not to the Chair;
- Other employees report to the Harbour Manager.

What to watch for

- Too much influence from one Board member;
- Unhealthy Board culture (conflict, meetings in the parking lot, lack of respect);
- Is the Board a watchdog or a lapdog?
- Too much good news from management or Board members. Is something being "buried?"
- "Bored" meetings;
- Roles and responsibilities that are not clearly defined, such as Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

What adds up to good governance

- Trust and communication between the Board and the Harbour Manager;
- Teamwork;
- Appropriate risk management.

This article is based on Alisdair Smith's presentation on governance at the HAABC conference in January. If you would like more information on board governance, contact Stacee Martin in the Pacific Region at (604) 666-1146. ✦

Calming the waters

Whoever is right or wrong about a situation, there is always plenty of room for tempers to flare. In the heat of the moment, words get said and fists get clenched. Since nobody has figured out a way to unsay words or undo actions, try not to get to that point in the first place. Here are some tips.

Defusing anger with body language

By communicating in a non-threatening way, you can often "take the wind out of somebody's sails." After all, it takes two to escalate a confrontation.

- Keep your hands down and visible;
- Move slowly and less often;
- Try not to "face off." Walk side-by-side with the person or stand at an angle;
- Make eye contact; and
- Nod or smile to convey concern and show you are listening.

Defusing anger verbally

When the volume gets turned up, body language alone is not enough to restore order. You will need to reassure the person in a more direct way.

- Speak slowly and calmly;
- Use the person's name often;
- Focus on them—acknowledge their issues, ask open questions;
- Reassure them that their concerns/feelings are understandable;
- Use short, simple sentences; and
- Agree where you can.

Dealing with intoxicated people

- Be calm, polite and firm;
- Stay out of reach;
- Offer your name, get theirs and use it;
- Take threats seriously;
- Try changing the topic to interrupt their escalation.

Watch for signs of violence

Although most angry people are violent on impulse, you can see the warning signs.

- Sudden movement towards you;
- Tight muscles;
- Twitchy face;
- Darting eyes (perhaps searching for a weapon);
- Shifting balance to the back foot;
- Speaking very fast, loudly or in a high/low tone; and
- Breathing—increased or holding.

Above all—Stay safe!

Most times, there is no point being a hero when faced with anger or violence.

- Know when to back off;
- Keep a safe distance from the person;
- Note escape routes;
- Make sure you have back-up or witnesses;
- Stand if the person is standing; and
- Keep a desk or countertop between you and the person.

This article is based on a presentation by Mario Govorchin of Holloway Zaiser Group at the HAABC conference. ✦