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## MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Mim McConnell and Members of the Assembly  
Mark Gorman, Municipal Administrator

**From:** Stephen Weatherman, P.E. Municipal Engineer 

**Reviewed:** Michael Harmon, P.E. Public Works Director

**CC:** Jay Sweeny, Finance Director

**Date:** January 21, 2014

**Subject:** **Report on Transit Services RFP for Marine Passenger Fee Fund  
Old Sitka Dock to Centennial Hall or O'Connell Bridge parking area  
2013 Cruise Ship Season**

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The first ship arrived at the Old Sitka Dock on 5/13/13 and the last ship arrived 9/17/13. A total of 24 ships docked at the Old Sitka Dock and the total passengers billed were 13,252 for a total payment of \$37,238.12. Public Works spot checked the loading of passengers at the Old Sitka Dock location and the Centennial Hall location. However we did not observe every ship loading at the Old Sitka Dock location or Centennial Hall.

The contract had the following requirements

- The services will be required continuously to and from Old Sitka Dock and Centennial Hall or O'Connell Bridge parking area throughout each day while a vessel is berthed at Old Sitka Dock.
- Maximum cruise passenger and crew member waiting time shall not exceed 15 minutes at either location.
- The contractor shall provide ADA accessible shuttles and provide assistance to ADA passengers as needed to help load and unload the ADA passengers.
- The final shuttle departing from Centennial Hall or O'Connell Bridge parking area at the end of the day must arrive at Old Sitka Dock prior to the cutoff time specified by the ship. That time must be identified and posted in the front of each shuttle in plain sight at the start of each day.
- Contractor shall provide a customer support liaison at both the Old Sitka Dock and the Centennial Hall or O'Connell Bridge parking area to coordinate loading and unloading. The customer support liaison shall provide onshore support to organize the vehicle cuing and coordinate the passenger loading and unloading.
- While traveling to and from the Old Sitka Dock advertisement for third party tours and other third party activities are not allowed on the shuttle vehicles.

- The selected transportation company has 30 days to obtain State of Alaska and USDOT licenses required to operate an interstate passenger transport company. In the event of failure to obtain the required licenses within the 30 day time limit the City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) may declare the selected transportation company in breach of the agreement effected by the acceptance of the bid. The bid guarantee will be forfeit and the CBS may award the contract to the next lowest responsible bidder.
- Contractor shall provide a report of the number of passengers and crew transported each trip. The information shall be submitted to the Public Works Department no later than the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month for the previous month.

We received no complaints directly from any passengers. However we received one email of concern from Chuck McGraw on 6/3/13 concerning the docking of a larger ship (Princess Cruise Lines) at the Old Sitka Dock. (See attached email correspondence.)

We received a second email of concern from Chris McGraw on 9/18/13 concerning the Celebrity Century docking at the Old Sitka Dock. (See attached email correspondence.)

We spoke with Fred Reeder Port Manager CLAA Alaska and received an email from Mr. Reeder. Mr. Reeder verified our observation that except for the Celebrity Century docking the remainder of the passenger transit service appeared to meet the contract requirements. According to Mr. Reeder in the case of the Celebrity Century docking the 15 minute pick up of passengers at Old Sitka Dock was not provided for every passenger. (See attached email correspondence.)

All though the contract has the option of two (2) one year extensions, the CBS has elected to go out for competitive bids for this season.

## Stephen Weatherman

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**From:** fredr@claalaska.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 23, 2013 8:03 AM  
**To:** Stephen Weatherman  
**Cc:** Rick Erickson; Chris McGraw  
**Subject:** RE: Bus Service to McGraws Dock

Stephen,

Sitka Tours seemed to be able to handle the transit from the Old Sitka Dock on days when we had the Regatta and Seven Seas Navigator but from my perspective they fell short when the Celebrity Century docked in September. There were factors that exacerbated the problem, i.e. arrival time of the ship and the mixing of passengers that were on tour with those that were independent visitors and just wanted the transit. Clearly from my perspective Sitka Tours did not have enough buses for the task at hand early in the day. They did not appear to ask for any additional help from the Old Sitka Dock or Tribal Tours. Certainly it did not run as smoothly as it did in 2012 when Alaska Coach Tours did the transfers.

It appears to me that somehow the dock owner needs to be involved in the transfer(transit) system as they have a vested interest in making sure that it runs smoothly and without any delays. By having the dock owner vested in the transfer system they would be able to employ as many buses as was necessary.

just my thoughts.

Fred Reeder  
Port Manager  
CLAA-Sitka

-----Original Message-----

**From:** "Stephen Weatherman" <[stephen@cityofsitka.com](mailto:stephen@cityofsitka.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 22, 2013 8:52pm  
**To:** "fredr@claalaska.com" <[fredr@claalaska.com](mailto:fredr@claalaska.com)>  
**Subject:** Bus Service to McGraws Dock

Dear Fred

You were going to send me a note on the performance of Sitka Tours on passenger service for the Celebrity Century when it docked at McGraws dock. I want to prepare a report to the Assembly on Sitka Tours performance this last cruise ship year. Let me know if you are willing to do this and if so when I can expect to receive the report.

Stephen L. Weatherman P.E.  
Municipal Engineer  
City and Borough of Sitka  
(907) 747-4042 Office  
(907) 738-5063 Cell  
[stephen@cityofsitka.com](mailto:stephen@cityofsitka.com)

## Stephen Weatherman

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**From:** Chris McGraw <chris@halibutpointmarine.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 17, 2013 2:47 PM  
**To:** Stephen Weatherman  
**Cc:** Chuck McGraw  
**Subject:** Dock Transportation

Stephen,

We have the Celebrity Century here at our dock today and Sitka Tours provided transportation as required by their city contract. I know that their contract requires that the passenger wait be less than 15 minutes. A large portion of the passengers were waiting longer than the required 15 minutes and in some cases passengers said they waited 45 minutes.

I was concerned about Sitka Tours ability to provide adequate transportation for this ship given that it has approximately 1800 passengers on board. I had offer assistance to Sitka Tours and I would have even paid to bring in additional drivers to operate the Alaska Coach busses in order to make sure that the transportation ran smoothly. However Trudy declined any help and said that she had it covered.

We have been marketing heavily towards Celebrity in trying to get them to make Sitka a weekly stop for the Century. A long wait and unhappy passengers will not do us any favors in attracting their ships to Sitka and our dock. Next May we have 2 ships that will have between 2500 and 3000 passengers that will each utilize our dock for one stop. Given the performance of Sitka Tours today, I am extremely concerned that they will not be able to provide adequate transportation for this volume of passengers next year. Especially given the fact that these ships have 7:00 am arrivals and Sitka Tours utilizes school busses and these busses will be required to transport Students in the morning around the same time that the ships arrive.

At this point the damage is done with regards to the Celebrity ship today, but I hope that you may be able to help to ensure that if Sitka Tours is going to be the contractor for bus transportation that they can adequately provide the service next year.

Thanks,  
Chris McGraw

## Stephen Weatherman

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**From:** Chuck McGraw <chuck@halibutpointmarine.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 03, 2013 9:29 AM  
**To:** Stephen Weatherman  
**Cc:** Chris McGraw; Michael Harmon  
**Subject:** Princess Ship June 2, 2013

Hi Stephen,

We had been contacted by Princess Cruise Lines about using the Old Sitka Dock for their ship that visited Sitka on June 2, 2013. Kirby Day is the person in charge in Alaska for Princess Cruise Lines and is based in Juneau.

We offered the use of our dock for free for the one visit. More passengers disembark the ship when using a dock as opposed to tendering. We hoped this would be the case and that Sitka's businesses would benefit.

Princess decided to anchor and tender. The ship carries approximately 3,000 passengers. It anchored out in front of Jamestown Bay. Tender trips one way were in the 20 minute range.

I spoke with John Dunlap with Allen Marine this morning after Fred Reeder CLAA relayed information concerning Sitka Tours ability to provide only 9 shuttle buses for use from the Old Sitka Dock to downtown. John confirmed that he had spoken to Trudy Prewitt and that she said she could only provide 9 buses. John said he had contacted Dennis McDonnell, Alaska Coach Tours, to see if ACT could help. Dennis said ACT would be willing to help. According to John Dunlap, Ms. Prewitt was unwilling to work with ACT to shuttle passengers from the Old Sitka Dock.

Stephen, I am not sure what the City contract with Sitka Tours requires from Sitka Tours. Halibut Point Marine owns 10 buses, 8 of which are in Sitka for use at Old Sitka Dock. I am upset that Sitka missed an opportunity to have more visitors downtown for a longer period of time, apparently because Sitka Tours was unwilling to work with another tour company and could not provide the necessary service with its own resources.

We have scheduled 3 large ships for next season that carry approximately 2,500 passengers to use the old Sitka Dock. One of these ships is the Disney Wonder. Disney will not tender in any port. We are discussing regular visits from Disney to Sitka. If adequate bus service cannot be provided, Sitka may miss out on a very significant opportunity.

Best Regards  
Chuck McGraw  
Halibut Point Marine  
Old Sitka Dock