

CITY OF QUINTE WEST

*Office of the Mayor
John R. Williams*



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January 29, 2013

Marc Ackert, Captain
M.V. Kawartha Voyageur
Ontario Waterway Cruises Inc.
Box 6, Orillia, ON L3V 6H9

Dear Mr. Ackert;

I am writing this letter to inform municipalities, members of the federal and provincial levels of government, economic development corporations, tourist associations, chamber of commerce organizations and various stakeholder groups along the Trent-Severn Waterway who are concerned with the impacts that the announced changes to the operation of the waterway will have on our collective local economies and the small businesses that rely on boating traffic within the system for their continued viability.

The affected municipalities and private business owners have been working together over the past number of months to develop solutions. One of the proposed solutions is the development of a new governance model for the operation of the Trent-Severn Waterway that will address local needs as well as the financial issues identified by the Federal Government.

To focus on these issues and determine how to best move forward in presenting these alternatives, a meeting was held on January 24th at Quinte West City Hall with MP Rick Norlock, Northumberland-Quinte West, MP Daryl Kramp, Prince Edward-Hastings, MP Barry Devolin, Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock, MP Dean Del Mastro, Peterborough, MP Bruce Stanton, Simcoe North, Marc Ackert, Ontario Waterway Cruises Inc. and myself. Discussions were held regarding reduced hours of operation, proposed fee increases and the development of an alternative governance model for the waterway. As a result of the meeting, a document has been prepared outlining the 2013 season of operation and the new schedule which provides a reduced level of service. It also includes information regarding a new alternative fee proposal in relation to the proposal identified by Parks Canada. These are initial thoughts that were gathered at the meeting and your input would be appreciated and encouraged. **Please send your comments/suggestions by email to: mayor@quintewest.ca.**

A further meeting is being scheduled in Ottawa with the intent to submit a proposed fee structure and proposed level of service to Park Canada prior to the mid-February consultation deadline.

Please consider the information attached and we thank you in advance for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

CITY OF QUINTE WEST

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John R. Williams', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John R. Williams,
Mayor

2013 Fee Proposal

This proposal is based on 4 considerations.

Operational Service Model of 2012 revisited for 2013 and beyond.

- The 2013 season fee structure remains unchanged from 2012 - across the board, lockage, moorage and utilities.
- The 2014 season increase of 10% on all canal “user fees”
- Starting in 2015 implement an ongoing “cpi” (3%) to move forward.

In keeping with the guidelines of the “User Fee Act”, there is a precondition for the Parks Canada Agency to “... explain to clients clearly how the user fee is determined....”. So far the Agency has not disentangled the ongoing issue surrounding the costs within their operational budget which are directly accountable to the service provided to the “boaters”. Consideration must be given to the year-round Watershed Management, seasonal day use visitation, and other Park activities which are embedded in their operational costs.

A second precondition of the “User Fee Act”, requires the Agency “...to establish standards which are comparable to those established by other countries with which a comparison is relevant....”. For this we draw attention to the 2013 Tolls, Passes and Permits on the Erie Canal (Upstate New York) –for a 25’ recreational craft the seasonal pass is \$50.00.

When reviewing fee proposals, accurate data does not exist within Parks Canada to validate traditional traffic patterns. They (Parks) have the data for total permits sold in each existing permit category as well as the boat count for every lockage performed. The missing data includes which pass holder was in the lock at any given time. Any conclusions respecting usage by pass type is merely speculation. We suggest an accurate “Point of Sale” system moving forward to allow such tracking, which can assist future fee needs.

Moorage rates show a large jump in the Parks model partly due to the new category of “daytime” mooring. The Parks proposed “daytime” charge is not acceptable. The negative impact of this fee on the local economies far outweighs any benefit derived. That being said the management of collecting such a fee with the diminished workforce defies logic.

Presently within the Parks regulations there is a 24 hour maximum moorage at busy sites, and 48 hour maximum at all other sites. This prevents clients from purchasing seasonal passes to simply use a facility of the Park as a permanent home for the summer. All lock sites have designated wall space for lock transit purposes and separate wall area for mooring.

Commercial seasonal rates and houseboat rates have not been established in the new Parks model. Our proposal keeps the traditional Commercial rates in relation with the increases we proposed for the recreational users.

The “fees” and “hours of operation” are to be linked for the ongoing “user fee” discussions. It is not acceptable to consider a diminished model and then move forward with a substantial fee increase. The 2013 Scheduled lock service as outlined in the Ministerial announcement of December 1 dramatically changes the service delivery model. Below are a few notes on this.

2013 SCHEDULED LOCK SERVICE

ON THE TRENT-SEVERN WATERWAY

The 2013 operational schedule for the TSW was announced in a News Release from Minister Kent on December 1, 2012. The release received little attention as many Stakeholders believed the announcement of October 18 respecting the 2013 Season of Operation was the end of the story.

What changes are in the new schedule?

- a) During the “peak” season June 21-Sept 2, an average of **2** hours have been cut from regular service daily. The implications of this change will be most significant at the “high” use stations. “High” use in terms of vessel traffic and land base visitation stressors.
- b) During the spring and fall season groups of locks will be operated by a roaming crew who will travel by truck with the “boaters” at a preset time **once daily** for transit through their area. 2 crews will be used per area described – one doing upbound transit and one doing downbound transit. The unattended stations in the group will be **closed and locked** to the public while workers are not present. This modified service will be delivered **once** a day beginning at a preset time – **10:00 am**. This start time will vary depending on distance needed to travel by operating staff. After travelling the described section the “boater” then waits until the following day for the next crew to begin their section. The **sections of canal** with this type of service are...
 - 1) Lock 1 to 6
 - 2) Lock 7 to 12
 - 3) Lock 13 to 18
 - 4) Lock 19 to 21- still to be determined how this section will operate?
 - 5) Lock 22 to 26
 - 6) Lock 37 to 41
 - 7) Murray Canal swing bridges??
- c) Numerous variables come to light within this model which don’t seem to have been addressed. Sections which have “**swing bridges**” before or after the scheduled areas? Are the swing bridges operated by the roaming crew? Once a day? Within operating hours? Are there reasonable available areas for vessels to safely wait for passage at these sites?
- d) What happens to a boater who breaks down during a group transit?
- e) What if more vessels are waiting than they can accommodate?
- f) How many vehicles used in transporting employees will be needed to make this model work?
- g) What crew operates the “once a day” lockage at Lindsay – do they travel from Bobcaygeon – thus leaving Bobcaygeon (busiest lock in district) closed while staff commute to Lindsay and back?
- h) How do “land based” users access closed locks? Bathrooms, drinking water, first aid?

This document is just a quick overview of the impact on the user base of the TSW. Both boater and land base visitors alike will be impacted by this reduced service level. When preparing fee proposals for the future, consider the reduced service model as part of the scenario.

Proposal from Parks Canada

Lockage

Product		Description	Proposed Fee (per foot)
One-way passage through a Level 1 lock		Single lock chamber Low Elevation Shorter transit time (Approx. 15 min)	\$0.60
One-way passage through a level 2 lock		Single or multi-lock chamber Medium to high elevation Longer transit time (15-45 min or more)	\$0.90
Six Day pass		Paper pass providing unlimited lock passages for the duration of 6 individual days. (not necessary to be consecutive days)	\$7.20
Seasonal Pass		Self-adhesive pass adhered to vessel providing unlimited lock passages on all Parks Canada canals and waterways for the entire season.	\$15.00

Mooring

	Day Mooring (Fee per foot)	Overnight Mooring (fee per foot)
Pleasure Boaters	\$1.00	\$2.00
Commercial Boaters	\$2.00	\$4.00

Alternative Fee Proposal

Lockage

	2013 Rate	2014 Rate (10% incr.)	2015 Rate (3% incr.)
Per Foot			
Single Lock and Return	\$0.90	\$0.99	\$1.02
One Day	\$1.60	\$1.76	\$1.81
Transit one-way	\$4.65	\$5.12	\$5.27
Six Days	\$5.05	\$5.56	\$5.72
Seasonal	\$8.80	\$9.68	\$9.97
Seasonal (Rental House Boats)	\$13.10	\$14.41	\$14.84
Seasonal (Commercial)	\$28.80	\$31.68	\$32.63

Mooring

Overnight (includes day mooring)	\$0.90	\$0.99	\$1.02
Seasonal, Overnight	\$9.80	\$10.78	\$11.10
Seasonal (Commercial), Overnight	\$16.60	\$18.26	\$18.81

USER FEE COMPARISON

Example used - 25' power boat

<u>Pass Type</u>	<u>2013 existing</u>	<u>2014 Parks Proposal</u>	<u>2014 Stakeholders Proposal</u>
Single lock	\$22.50 return	\$30.00 return	\$24.75 return
1 day	40.00	not available	44.00 unlimited
6 day	126.25	180.00	139.00
Seasonal	220.00	375.00	242.00
Transit	116.25	not available	128.00
Moorage	\$22.50	\$75.00	\$24.75
Seasonal	\$245.00	not available	\$269.50