

Boat lift Option Aug 19, 2021

Delegation for Council (COW) Aug 23, 2021

A proposal for a travelift is being presented to Council this evening. The proposal makes some interesting points but appears to ignore many critical considerations.

Boater's benefit.

A travelift can provide haul out and launch at anytime. This is a benefit to boaters who wish to book their own date and not be tied to the marina's schedule. Also haul out can be arranged *economically* during the season for a quick repair.

Fully User Pay

. "The Cobourg marina facility operates on a user pay basis being wholly funded from fees received for rentals and usage."

Former CAO Stephen Peacock

Asset Management Plan

Our treasurer has stated that the Marina reserve fund, at the end of this year, is essentially at zero dollars. Before any significant purchase is made this Plan should be completed. In 2015, an Asset Management Plan was completed by Paul Gauthier and he stated that:

"There is a \$ 1.25M shortfall attributed to the projected replacement costs of C, D, E and F docks, within the next ten to fifteen years, for which the marina does not have accumulated reserves sufficient to cover these costs"

Safety

Our harbour has used a crane for over 100 years - accident free to any one's memory.

Liability

Lifting and securing a boat has inherent dangers to the health and safety of the operator and staff and potential property damage to the watercraft. If Cobourg undertakes the purchase and operation of a travelift, the Town can expect increased insurance premiums and possibly be responsible for the full damage award if an insurer can find a means to decline coverage. What are the increased costs that will result? No agreement to purchase and operate a travelift should be considered by council until these potential costs are known.

Storage

To garner many of the benefits of a travelift, boats will need to be moved at any time. A new storage yard will have to provide sufficient space for roads (called fairways) to access each boat. Currently boats are “sardined” into the storage lot with inches separating them (50-60 boats) This yard would have to be enlarged to perhaps 3 times its current size. An obvious solution is to winter “active” boats in the trailer park – which empties at the precise week the boats are hauled out.

Profitability

An independent financial analysis (Bryan Lambert WFP and TL delegation) on haul-out and launch indicates that the crane produces about a \$5K profit and the travelift would show a loss of about a \$50k per year. This was based on lifting 100 boats.

The current “lift” is for about 50 boats a year, so the deficit would be somewhat greater. An updated business case has not been provided. Similarly, a marketing / sales plan showing revenue generation has not been provided.

Power wash, blocking, shrink-wrap etc. are all the same for both proposed options.

Our Marina makes about \$ 75K profit per year, which is needed to pay for capital repairs and additions.

Operator

An important factor is the cost of the heavy equipment operator. Can we find an experienced and qualified operator and will they be full-time staff? Will this operator be available in a timely manner?

Conclusion

Its really all about money (taxes). At the CCC, taxpayers are spending \$1M a year to keep it operating not including the building mortgage which is still not paid off.

We assume it is always good to consider all options so one gets the Big Picture, but where is this money coming from? Giving it an honest look, we are convinced, the travelift should not be considered as an option, and should, at this time, be taken off the table.

Respectfully submitted,
Cobourg Taxpayers Association