

For item #18

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Jolly Benson** <[jolly.s.benson@gmail.com](mailto:jolly.s.benson@gmail.com)>

Date: Tue, Jan 21, 2014 at 11:40 AM

Subject: Outer Mole lease

To: [CSmith@keywestcity.com](mailto:CSmith@keywestcity.com), Tony Yaniz <[tyaniz@keywestcity.com](mailto:tyaniz@keywestcity.com)>, Craig Cates

<[ccates@keywestcity.com](mailto:ccates@keywestcity.com)>, Teri Johnston

<[tjohnston@keywestcity.com](mailto:tjohnston@keywestcity.com)>, [jweekley@keywestcity.com](mailto:jweekley@keywestcity.com), [clopez@keywestcity.com](mailto:clopez@keywestcity.com), [mrossi@keywestcity.com](mailto:mrossi@keywestcity.com)

Good Morning Commissioners, Mr. Mayor, and Ms. Smith,

I am writing you today to express my feelings on the lease renewal for the Outer Mole Pier.

I feel the Navy has made their position known, and while the city is losing money now, we stand to lose a lot more if the Outer Mole is put out to bid and we lose it to a private entity.

I urge you all to vote to renew the lease under the terms laid out by the Navy. I would then urge you, before the ink is dry on that contract, to begin the process of raising disembarkation fees for cruise ships. We should be able to do this, since we can demonstrate handily that the city is losing money at the current rate.

The revenues from the increase should be earmarked for the Truman Waterfront Park. This alone would be a gain for the city and its citizens. Ideally, the increase would be enough to fully fund the maintenance of this park, provided we don't try to build a Taj Mahal out there. Some well maintained grass, lots of benches in the shade, a jogging path, maybe some small pavilions...

The increase in revenues from larger disembarkation fees should cover this. Since it is an area directly used and impacted by cruise tourism, there should be little difficulty adjusting the fee so the city is seeing a profit.

As a side note, if this lease is not renewed and a private company takes it over, what do we do if they decide they do not want events the city hosts to use the pier? Food for thought.

Thank you for your time,  
Jolly Benson

P.S. Ms. Smith, is it possible to have this read during the citizens comments during the City Commission meeting on Wednesday? Thank you.