

Sarah Taggart

From: Cheri Smith
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2022 4:32 PM
To: Sarah Taggart
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Please withdraw proposed Pier B cruise ship agreement
Attachments: scrubber-discharges-Apr2021.pdf

From: D. Cricket Desmarais <cricket.desmarais@mac.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2022 4:29 PM
To: Teri Johnston <tjohnston@cityofkeywest-fl.gov>; Jimmy Weekley <jweekley@cityofkeywest-fl.gov>; Samuel Kaufman <skaufman@cityofkeywest-fl.gov>; Billy Wardlow <bwardlow@cityofkeywest-fl.gov>; Gregory Davila <gdavila@cityofkeywest-fl.gov>; Mary Lou Hoover <mlhoover@cityofkeywest-fl.gov>; Clayton Lopez <clopez@cityofkeywest-fl.gov>; Shawn D. Smith <sdsmith@cityofkeywest-fl.gov>
Cc: Cheri Smith <csmith@cityofkeywest-fl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please withdraw proposed Pier B cruise ship agreement

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Dear Madame Mayor & Commissioners,

Please withdraw your current proposed Pier B cruise ship agreement immediately, for all the reasons previously outlined in an email I sent a few weeks ago. I received no reply to questions I carefully posed with faith that there might be some substantial reason for what seemed blatantly against the will of voters & blatantly in support of Pier B. Is it because there are none that align with the values we have strived to communicate in the countless special meetings regarding this issue?

I am including said previous email content below. Your transparency would be of great value to all right now. I do hope to better understand where you are coming from & why what you are posing goes against the grain of what we voted for a year & a half ago...

Thank you.

Cricket Desmarais

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SENT MARCH 12, 2022

Dear Madame Mayor & Commissioners,

~~I would like to thank you for unanimously agreeing to pass the latest resolution representing efforts to protect our marine environment & carrying capacity against cruise ship operations. While it bears only partial resemblance of what the community voted for, I do understand the potential litigious impacts on the City if~~

~~original ordinances are forced & am therefore equally as grateful as I am disappointed that you found a way to address it to the best of your abilities.~~

I do, however, have questions as to the direction in amending the existing agreement between the City & Pier B Development Corporation. From my understanding, current negotiations would allow Pier B to bring in MORE people on MORE days on LARGER ships, including those with lengths that exceed FL DEP. They also do not address the highly problematic existing term agreement.

Is this true? There is no logical reason I can think of for why any of this would be so. Who is seated at the table during these negotiation meetings? What compromises are each party making? What benefits are each gaining? Are there minutes available to the public, & if so, where can I find them?

Negotiation implies two opposing parties partaking in communications with an aim to resolve an issue/issues in a way that ALL involved parties find acceptable. If the council finds these terms acceptable, I am definitely missing something & would like to understand what that is.

- Please help me understand what compromises each party is offering in these negotiations, & what benefits each are gaining, & if I might have access to public minutes or any other such documentation of these meetings. I would also like to know who attends the meetings.
- Please address proposed term agreements, maximum passenger counts, ship lengths, & number of visits during your negotiations in a way that most closely resembles what voters intended.
- Please do NOT let Pier B actually end up with even MORE than what they currently have. At the very least, enforce current regulation.
- Please implore your sense of long-term planning & consider how intricately connected our economy is to this issue through our marine ecosystem. The decisiveness, action, & boundaries set today under your leadership will ripple out to affect the big picture of our future with lasting impact.

As you know, *ocean recreation alone in the Keys represents 4.4 billion dollars of our local Blue Economy* (8.5 billion total asset value). This is in contrast to *33.75 million from cruise ship passengers who represent only 10% of our tourist*

visitors. (Our remaining 90% spend 551.3 billion in lodging alone). Half of our US fisheries depend on coral reefs, with a commercial value of over \$100 million annually. Nearly 50% of Monroe County Citizens count on our Marine Sanctuary to earn their living.

Unfortunately, 0% of these big ship corporations give two hoots about their impact on our Blue Economy assets & our Sanctuary as they cruise through it. If they did, they would find more responsible, ethical systems to deal with their waste, pollution, & ports of call selection. Consider the following behaviors:

- Dumping bilge, solid waste, or sewage in the sea. As current (moronic) regulation stands, ships can legally dump “treated” sewage—which adds to water quality problems including oxygen depletion and increased nitrogen & phosphorus, conditions that are negative factors on our marine habitat, especially coral—3 miles from shore. They can dump RAW sewage 7 miles from shore— the same distance from shore as our fragile reefs. Understand that just ONE 3,000 passenger ship creates 150,000 gallons of sewage a week— enough to fill 10 backyard swimming pools.
- Choosing ports of call where they must traverse over corals & protected marine sanctuary habitat & do not have harbors appropriate for their draft, imposing poor water quality on the marine ecosystems.
- Disregarding the carrying capacity of the hosting city, which ultimately diminishes its value along with the quality of life for locals. **Has there been any analysis of this recently, specific to Key West? The last I know of is a county-wide study done in 1996. If we don't have this data in more recent years, isn't it time to do one?*
- Pretending that the now-mandatory use of scrubbers deal with their air pollution instead of addressing the fact that this “solution” simply displaces the problem into the water. It's a smoke & mirrors PR loophole that gives big ships an out. Meanwhile, studies show that scrubber washwater increases turbidity, acidity, and creates high concentrations of PAHs & heavy metals accumulated in sediments, especially in coastal areas, increasing water toxicity & acidity in aquatic ecosystems along with it. This poses a threat to:

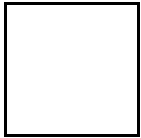
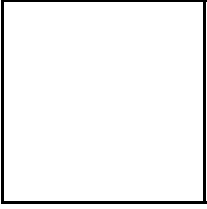
- All coral building organisms, as acidic water significantly reduces their ability to produce hard exoskeletons. Not exactly the best way of supporting *Mission Iconic Reef* efforts, no matter how much money Walsh wants to throw at it. Once you plant the fragile corals back in the ocean, they need a stable environment in which to take hold & grow.
- Our fisheries, due to the high likelihood of bioaccumulation in the marine food web, including in fish consumed by humans.
- Manatees & dolphins: studies link the heavy metals & PAHs to cancers and reproductive dysfunction in marine mammals.
- Note 1: All cruise ships had to meet a 2020 compliance of getting outfitted for these scrubbers, which means all cruise ship traffic from here on out will have them, resulting in negative impacts to our water quality we've yet to see or study. The larger the ship, the bigger the output of scrubber washwater & water quality problems that come with it. We are fortunate that Dr. Rice is taking on this task of measuring water quality against the anthropogenic pause baseline. I hope he is especially encouraged to take samples near & around these scrubbers.
- Note 2: Scrubbers are banned in CA, HI, CT, & many other parts of the world. **We need to look into how they did this & how we can, too.*

Thank you in advance for your replies to my questions & for your efforts & actions in advocating for & protecting our marine ecosystems & responding in alignment with the will of citizens who voted to have smaller ships, cleaner seas, & less impact to our oceans & our land.

Respectfully,

Cricket Desmarais
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Learn more about scrubbers here:



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