



MEMORANDUM

P.O. Box 4100 ♦ FRISCO, COLORADO 80443

TO: MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL

FROM: TONY O'ROURKE, DIANE MCBRIDE

RE: MARINA ACTION PLAN

DATE: NOVEMBER 30, 2021

Frisco Marina Park is operated by the Town of Frisco as an enterprise fund with a full-time staff of four, five full-time staff who split their time between the Marina and the Adventure Park, and 40 to 50 seasonal employees.

The Marina Park consists of 10 acres on the shores of Dillon Reservoir. The Marina Park includes 3.26 acres of Town of Frisco owned land and approximately 7 acres of leased land from the Denver Water Board for recreation purposes. The Marina boating facilities are governed by special use permits from the Dillon Reservoir Recreation Committee a division of the Denver Water Board.

Frisco Marina Park, per the Marina Master Plan, is recognized as a marina first and park second, providing one of the two primary access points for the boats to the lake, the other being Dillon Marina. Per the Operation Performance Audit completed by F3 Marina in 2020, there are three entities at the Frisco Bay Marina that are equally important to the Town: the marina, the rental operation, and the public park. Future plans must take into account each of these three entities.

The areas owned and leased from the Denver Water Board include areas in the 100 year flood plain and designated wetlands, administered by the US Army Corps of Engineers. The water elevation is controlled by the Denver Water Board to meet downstream water needs, so the lake level fluctuates between high water elevations of 9,017 feet above sea level (ASL) and a base elevation of 9,000 throughout the main marina area. The marina can open for public use when water levels reach an elevation of 9,004'. In most years, historic water level dates indicate that the marina can open to the public May and remain open throughout October 95% of the time.

The basis for this Marina Park Action Plan is a product of F3 Marina's Operational Performance Audit of October 2020, F3 Marina's Operational Performance Audit One Year review of October 2021, Frisco Bay Marina customer and employee feedback, and Edgewater Resources' Frisco Bay Marina Water Levels Operations Plan from November 2021.

The framework of this Marina Action Plan is built around optimizing and balancing the three core customer activities at Frisco Marina Park, as well as, creating a high performance employee culture to ensure both Marina customers and employee experiences are outstanding. The core Marina Park customer and employee's areas of focus include the following:

- **Marina Boating Customers**
 - Slips
 - Moorings
 - Storage
 - Launch ramp
 - Service Facility
 - Parking
- **Rental Operation**
 - Paddle sports including canoes, kayaks, stand up paddle boards, and Hobie Cats
 - Motorized boat rentals
 - Parking
- **Public Park**
 - Beach
 - Restaurant
 - Trails
 - Playground
- **Employee interests**
 - Leadership
 - Customer focus
 - Empowerment
 - Continuous quality improvement
 - Salary/benefits
 - Recruitment/retention
 - Training
 - Reward/recognition

1. Marina Boating Customers

Slips

The Marina has 160 seasonal dock slips, spread evenly across six piers accessed by a main central walkway. The docks are made of galvanized steel frames, polyethylene floats with polystyrene molded flotation inside. The docks and piers are secured by winch-controlled galvanized cable anchorage. Piers and fingers are concrete panels with exposed aggregate finish, vinyl rub rail and aluminum side mount cleats.

The Town of Frisco relies on water level projections from Denver Water, and Denver Water relies on the Natural Resource Conservation Service, Colorado Basin River Forecast Center and Missouri Basin River Forecast Center, who have models that integrate snowpack, weather conditions, future precipitation, soil moisture, evapotranspiration and other influencers

to predict streamflow. During the 2021 boating season, water level projections suggested that water levels would not remain above elevation 9,004' for a significant portion of the boating season, and the decision was made to leave the floating docks farther out in the water in anticipation of falling water levels. This area is known as "Dock Island." The creation of Dock Island cost approximately \$75,000 and resulted in less than optimal boating customer experience due to the lack of bathroom access, medical equipment, wake zone disturbance and shuttle service availability after hours.

As we are now learning to expect more and more, weather patterns shifted in unanticipated ways and water levels remained high throughout the season, which negated the necessity for Dock Island. Despite lower water level projections prepared by a team of highly qualified scientists, hydrologists, and meteorologists, we have learned in 2021 water level projections are not an exact science. Based on an analysis by Edgewater Resources of historic water levels, we could expect Frisco Marina to be operational nearly the entire boating season from May to October 95% of the time.

Future Operational Approach for Slip Customers

Based on an analysis and recommendation by Edgewater Resources and F3 Marina, staff recommend the following approach to low water conditions in the future.

- Spring of 2022, when the water levels allow (9,004'), move the docks back to their normal position in the reservoir. In the future, leave the docks in place year-round, and eliminate the operational expense and wear and tear of moving the docks for the winter.
- Marina operations staff will monitor weather patterns and water levels with Denver Water and climate projections from NOAA, and monitor conditions within the marina and consider new strategies every five years to adapt the facility to evolving climate change and weather patterns. Future adaptations could include additional excavation of materials to allow the marina to operate at water levels below 9,004', or relocation of floating docks farther to the east in deeper water areas. It is important to note that any future excavation projects would require significant capital investment, engineering studies, and permitting to implement much like the Big Dig. Permanent relocation of the floating dock system to the east towards existing deeper water would also require significant investment and potentially require significant changes to upland infrastructure for utilities, better services, and access.
- Simplify the rate structure for slips, moorings and storage, and implement installment billing in FY2022. Recommend moving to a standardized price per slip, charging one price for moorings and charging per square footage for storage rates. None of these rate measures will result in significant cost increase to boating customers. Rates will be reviewed with Town Council at the December 14, 2021 Council meeting.
- Update all stock anchor winches to allow the dock.
- Dock system to rest on the reservoir bottom if and when the water level recedes.

- Promote and advertise the slip rates as a season, moving away from the mention of 153 days, emphasis on “based on weather conditions”.
- As long as there is water in the reservoir around the docks boaters can use their slip.
- Purchase an additional 15 to 20 mooring balls to be held in reserve for boaters that wish to purchase them as an “extended season”. Boaters who purchase this will need to be clearly aware to either not to wait long if they intend to use the Frisco Bay Marina storage, or have a plan to haul out at Dillon.

Moorings

An alternative to moving docks to deeper water, is utilizing mooring balls to position and secure boats in greater water depths. This is much less expensive than additional docks, at approximately \$900 per mooring ball. Currently there are 40 mooring balls positioned at the marina. The downside to moorings is the space required between mooring balls for safety and navigation. Accordingly, there is a limited capacity of probably 15-20 additional mooring balls.

Storage

The marina offers many storage options, including slips, moorings, dry storage, trailer storage, winter storage, and paddle sport rack storage. Rate recommendations will be addressed later in this report.

Launch Ramp

For three years the boat launch area has experienced high ground water and flooding conditions when the reservoir is full. The drainage problem in this area is a liability, inconvenient and unsightly. Prior to the start of the 2022 season, staff will work with a contractor to install the necessary pumps to remove excess ground water from the boat launch area and divert it to either Dillon Reservoir, if permitted by Denver Water Board, or to a containment and treatment area on property.

Service Yard Facility

As noted in the Operational Performance Audit One Year Review, progress has been made to clean up and organize the service yard. Such clean-up efforts will continue on an annual basis. Additional recommendations include removing the notch in the fence north of the building to allow more yard space and improving insulation of the current tent with an eventual replacement with a new building.

Parking

The availability of parking, especially for peak periods in the summer, has been identified as a major concern by customers and staff. The overall parking capacity is approximately 300 parking spaces, of which 180 are paved and 120 are unpaved. Parking at the marina is located in the following four distinct areas:

- The south parking area serving the boat ramp consists of 72 vehicle spaces and 25 vehicle/trailer spaces.
- The north parking area, serving the park and playground areas, consisting of 88 vehicles spaces.
- The trailhead area which includes 26 vehicle spaces.
- Parcel B-1 which is a gravel area that serves informal overflow parking for ~120 vehicles.

The 2022 recommendation is to implement a paid parking system for the 180 paved parking spaces at the marina. Parking in the B-1 lot would remain free. This paid parking system would be managed by a third party, and could include a dedicated number of approximately 70 spaces reserved as “boater parking” to ensure space for the boaters. The cost for boater reserved parking could be added into an annual boater fee cost. An additional 8-10 vehicle parking spaces could also be added in front of the Service Facility.

A third party would utilize the latest technologies to enforce parking. Their goal would be to reach 92% occupancy at peak times so there is always space for boaters, visitors and employees. They would maximize space utilization through ongoing real-time data analysis using state-of-the-art license plate technology. No meters or gates would be used. The first 30 minutes would be free at all times. Preliminary rate recommendations include: Monday thru Thursday at \$0.75 per half hour with a \$10.00 maximum. Friday thru Sunday and holidays at \$0.75 per half hour for the first three hours, \$2.50 per half hour thereafter to a maximum of \$15.00.

We would recommend discounted parking fees to boaters who include the cost of parking in their annual fees, and to local Frisco residents.

Long term, staff recommends paving the parcel B-1 lot for 120 spaces at a cost of approximately \$900,000 or \$7,500/space.

2. Rental Operation

The motorized and non-motorized rental operation produces a significant amount of revenue for the Town of Frisco. Year to date in FY2021 non-motorized equipment rentals represented 63% of total marina revenue, compared to 13% for slip and mooring revenue. A significant amount of time and labor are dedicated to the rental business, and attention and investment should continue in this customer service sector of the business.

With the completion of the new building, traffic will be split between marina users and rental users. The new building will serve as a boater services facility with a retail store, while the Lund House will focus on rentals and retail. Additional recommendations include exploring options for outdoor kiosks via tablets or rolling stations, improving rental signage and wayfinding, adding in a reception counter for same day reservations only, moving to credit only/online only payments, and adding GPS locators to all rentals. It is also recommended that staff continue to replace the rental fleet on an expeditious replacement schedule.

Future investments should be made to expand the floating paddle sport docks to accommodate more storage and rental customer launch opportunities.

3. Public Park

The park aspect of the marina includes the restaurant, beach, trails and playground. The park occupies approximately 10 acres, of which 60,000 sq. ft. or 15% is open park and beach space.

Two of the greatest areas of improvement for the public park area are parking and restrooms. Parking could be enhanced by paving the B-1 lot. In the interim, parking could be free in the B-1 lot. The bathrooms need to be expanded and made more space efficient.

Design services for the renovation of the Lund House, Island Grill restaurant, and bathrooms are included in the FY2022 budget. In addition, funds have been allocated in FY2022 to design and landscape the area between the Lund House, the new building, the beach and the docks.

The Island Grill is a concessionaire operation at the marina. Discussions with the owner, Bobby Kato, indicate that future growth of this business is dependent on upgrades to the kitchen, storage and seating areas. These upgrades will be reviewed as part of the design work in FY2022. Staff recommend that should Mr. Kato be willing to pay for future capital restaurant improvements, the Town could lengthen the contract term to permit appropriate capital expense amortization.

One additional recommendation is to strengthen the connection between the Marina and Main Street with enhanced wayfinding and signage. The current signage is inconsistent, lacks branding and does not have a distinctive identity. For FY2023, staff recommend undertaking a complete signage, wayfinding and branding strategy and implementation plan.

4. Employee Interests

Our greatest asset is our employees. Members of the Town's leadership team and Matt Bauer with F3 Marina interviewed marina staff at the end of the season to capture their interests and recommended areas of improvement. Overall, employee interests include leadership, customer focus, empowerment, continuous quality improvement, salary/benefits/perks, recruitment/retention, training and reward/recognition.

F3 Marina has worked with the Town since February 2021 on operational improvements and management services. Based on feedback received from boaters during the original audit in 2020, F3 Marina staff learned that the boaters felt as though the marina's priority was on the rental business and not the boaters. Acknowledging this feedback, they proposed the Marina Manager role for 2021 to provide exceptional guest service to the boaters and managing the day to day operations on the docks, ramp, and grounds. This new structure kept the General Manager role, with three managers reporting to him/her: rental operations manager, marina manager, and service manager. While this structure works in theory, all pieces are needed to ensure success.

The summer of 2021 presented a significant number of challenges, including the absence of a full time General Manager on site. Recruitment continues at this time for an experienced, customer focused and inspirational General Manager to enhance the business model and culture of the marina and its staff.

Additional areas of improvement include:

- Continue to provide all staff guest service training. While many guests are pleased with the level of guest service at the marina, there is the need to continuously improve response to customer issues, training and feedback systems. Overall, the net promoter score was 77 for the season, which is quite good. Recommendations moving forward include continuing with the guest surveys, analyzing results and feedback, implementing recommended improvements and change, and actively listening to our guests and boaters. Also a diverse customer advisory committee should be created to provide regular monthly feedback to the management team.
- Update and acquire staff uniforms that are appealing and reinforce the Frisco Marina Park culture and brand. Require staff consistency wearing the uniforms for identification and branding.
- Finalize standard operating procedures to ensure consistent delivery of services.
- Continue to upgrade the website to educate guests about marina services, rentals and opportunities.
- Continue to focus on and train staff on customer service excellence, leading by example, employee empowerment, continuous quality improvement, and recognizing employee excellence.
- Prioritize the Town's Strategic Plan and FY2022 Business Plan priorities and link them to staff's annual performance plans.
- Review full time and seasonal staff salaries and benefits to ensure the ability to attract and retain the best.
- Maintain employee perks and reintroduce specific, transparent perks for marina employees.
- Recognize excellent staff services and performance on a consistent basis. Reward staff with social team building activities, individual and collective recognition and merit rewards.
- Continue to invest in capital projects at the marina including the following:
 - Installation and certification of the dock fuel system (FY2022)
 - Add Wi-Fi services to the docks
 - Expand motorized boat rental inventory.
 - Fix and expand the parking lot lighting system
- Emergency response. Emergency preparedness and procedures are key to any successful marina operator. F3 Marina recommends:

- Discuss with Summit County the need to invest more resources into the Sheriff's Department to handle the increased capacity of visitors on the reservoir?
- If not, does the Town of Frisco need to invest in a "Harbor Patrol" and acquire the appropriate insurance and staff to perform on water rescue?

Summary

The Frisco Bay Marina is one of the premier amenities of the Town of Frisco. The following questions are for Council's discussion and feedback:

- 1) **Operations.** Does Council support the operational recommendation to keep the docks in place year-round, thereby eliminating Dock Island?
- 2) **Rates.** For 2021, all boats were measured and storage rates were calculated based on the length of the boats. This method is labor intensive, not an industry standard, and subject to human error. For 2022, staff recommends simplifying the rate structure and following industry standards.

Specific rates will be reviewed with Council at the December 14th Council meeting for final approval.

Slips:

Charge a standard price per slip. FBM has 24', 30', and 40' slips. A standard rate would be charged per slip, as opposed to the current measured length of the boat. Preliminary analysis indicates that of the 158 slips occupied in 2021, this change would raise fees for 15 of the 158 slip holders, or less than 10% of the slip holders. The fee increase ranges from \$10.88/season to \$94.18/season, which on the high end is 7% of the proposed fee for the slip. There is one slip holder who would be significantly affected by this change as he has a 17' boat in a 30' slip; staff would work directly with him to move him to a 24' slip.

The proposed slip rates would be:

- 24' = \$1,350
- 30' = \$1,700
- 40' = \$2,300

For comparison, the 2021 rate for a 24' boat was \$1,762.56 (\$0.48/ft/day * 24' * 153 days)

Moorings:

Charge a flat fee of \$900 per vessel regardless of the size of the boat.

Storage:

Charge by square foot for storage, and not linear foot.

Rentals:

Simplify rental pricing.

- 3) **Employee Perks.** Is Council supportive of perks for Marina employees provided these perks are transparent, limited, equitable and managed? Such perks could include the usage of rental vessels during non-peak operating hours?

- 4) **Parking.** Is Council supportive of implementing a paid parking system at the marina from June 1 – September 30? If yes, the details of this program will be brought to Council prior to implementation. Further questions to consider may include:
- a. Should discounted parking passes be available for all boaters or only annual fee customers?
 - b. Would Council like to see a Frisco-resident discount for parking?
 - c. Should paid parking be implemented on all parking lots at the Marina?
 - d. Does Council have other ideas they would like staff to explore?

Attachments:

- Attachment 1: Operational Performance Audit from F3 Marina, dated 10/31/2020
- Attachment 2: Frisco Bay Marina Water Levels Operations Plan, dated 11/17/2021
- Attachment 3: Operational Performance Audit One Year Review, dated 10/1/2021