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Number 26

Newsletter

August 1967

COMPARATIVE ESTIMATES NOW IN ON MOORAGE SEWER SYSTEM COSTS: At its August 17th meeting the Executive Committee considered "hard" estimates on the comparative costs of sewerage collection systems for our larger moorages. Because of the many rumors, confusion and uncertainties surrounding this matter, it was felt that our members should have this information without delay.

These cost figures involve the two types of installations receiving the most attention. They are: (1) an above-the-water pipe line along the pier or float into which houseboats would pump their sewage. This would require each floating home owner to buy and install a sump-pump and (2) an under-water pipe line into which houseboats would discharge by gravity flow and which would utilize gravity to feed into a common sump-pump or lift station near shore.

Although both the Engineering and Health Departments prefer the gravity systems (see NEWSLETTER No. 24, April 1967) the city will approve any other type of installation that will do the job. This flexible policy has led some to believe that moorage owners could save money with an installation that would require the individual houseboats to install their own sump-pumps. Now the itemized estimates for both have been received and this turns out not to be the case.

For example, here are the figures for a certain moorage with 16 floating homes. The contractor's estimate for installing the above-the-water system is \$10,000.00. To this, of course, must be added a minimum of \$500.00 each to the owners of the 16 houseboats for the installation of individual sump-pumps (this figure is considered minimal). This brings the grand total to \$18,000.00. The estimate for a gravity system, which would not require the purchase and installation of individual sump-pumps, is \$10,277.00.

Some contractors have been pushing hard for the above-the-water, individual sump-pump installations. The reasons seem to be two-fold: (1) they are not equipped and/or competent to do the more sophisticated kind of job, and (2) they would make a lot more money selling and installing individual sump-pumps.

The Executive Committee recognizes that individual moorages present different problems. There are a few small moorages where the individual sump-pumps is the only practical solution. But at large moorages, particularly where houseboats are three or more deep on a pier or float, the under-water gravity line is not only the most practical, but also the most economical.

Permits have now been issued for several of the gravity systems at larger moorages. In spite of the difficulty in finding interested and competent contractors work is under way. Where there is concern and unclarity on this question the Executive Committee suggests that a moorage meeting be called.

Our Association opened discussion with the Engineering Dept. on this matter more than four years ago. Our constructive approach to the problem is recognized in a letter to the Association dated June 29, 1967 from Mr. Roy W. Morse, City Engineer and Dr. S.P. Lehman, Director of Public Health. It says in part: "Through your efforts to a great extent, Seattle is the first city that we know of that has achieved the connection of a floating home to a public sewer system. Precedents that are established here will be reflected in municipalities throughout the country in the future."

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LAKE UNION CLEAN-UP DAY REMOVED 30,000 FEET OF DANGEROUS DRIFT: Some 30,000 feet of dangerous and unsightly drift was removed from the waters of Lake Union and Portage Bay July 8th during the second annual "Clean-Up Day" sponsored by the Lake Union Association in cooperation with the Northwest Marine Industries, Floating Homes Assn., City of Seattle, Seattle Chamber of Commerce and (on paper) the area yacht and boat clubs. This was double the amount collected last year. Commercial firms donated tug boats, crews and boom sticks. The Engineering Dept. assigned its drift boat "Pelican Pete" to the "Debris Fleet." All agree, however, that most of the credit must go to the superb organizing job done by the co-chairmen, John Locke Jr. and Mark Freeman.

In sending the Lake Union Assn. "congratulations on a job well done" our Executive Committee pointed out that the small boats that did show up did an excellent job, but that many more were needed. "If the area yacht clubs" the letter said in part, "do not wish to participate in future years they should be dropped from sponsorship, but in any event their members should at least be requested to slow down when passing the small boats or the log booms. Wake from speeding boats scattered debris and made it necessary to collect materials again."

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ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT IN RACE FOR SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL: On a program which he sums up under the slogan "Cities Are For People," Association President Kenneth F. Kennedy has filed for the City Council. He is in a field of seven candidates in the race for Position No. 2, the seat now held by Councilman Ray Eckmann, who is not seeking re-election. The other candidates are: State Rep. Sam Smith, Robert J. Block, Bill Sears, Bob Dunn, By Hartley and W.G. (Bill) Gordon.

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ALEX W. BRINDLE NEW PRESIDENT OF THE LAKE UNION ASSOCIATION: Alex W. Brindle of the Wards Cove Packing Co., has been elected president of the Lake Union Assn. to succeed Ralph Alden of the Fisher Flouring Mills, who did not seek another term. Tom R. Gillespie of the Seattle Marina Inc., and William A. Herzog, St. Vincent De Paul, were elected vice presidents and John France of Franco's Hidden Harbor was re-elected secretary-treasurer.

Those elected to three-year terms on the Board of Trustees are: Herbert Blaney, Lake Union Dry Dock Co.; Joseph R. Burke, Burke Industrial Center; Terry Pettus, Floating Homes Assn.; Frank Deuster, Northwest Marine Industries; John R. Gilbert, Lake Union Terminals; Stan Gallup, Elks' Lodge No. 92; L.P. Staman, Tyee Yacht Club; Earl Wieprecht, property owner and Tom R. Yeuell, Diesel Oil Sales Co.

A new Zoning Committee was set up with Ralph Alden as chairman, Other members are Joe Burke, John Gilbert, Tom Gillespie, Mark Freeman, Tom Yeuell, George Gunn, Terry Pettus and John Locke Jr.

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PLEASE DON'T REFER RENTAL REQUESTS TO THE ASSOCIATION: There was a time when we welcome inquiries from those seeking to rent a floating home. But for several years the number of rental units have declined. Some moorages do not permit a rental houseboat. Requests continue to increase although we have had only five vacancy listings from members since last October. The Association averages 15 inquiries a day from those wishing to rent a houseboat. Most of these referrals come from members. We wish we could help, but we can't. Much time is consumed explaining what we all know - rentals are scarce and when a vacancy occurs the owner has no need to list with us. Also in contacting the Association please phone afternoons and evenings only. The numbers are EA 9-1517 and EA 5-1132.

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NEWS NOTES FROM HERE BY THERE: Dean M. Jennings of Sausalite, Calif., an officer in the Marin Boat Dweller's Assn. (Houseboats), visited Seattle this month. He and Mrs. Jennings were taken on a water tour of our floating homes community and were quite impressed, particularly with the progress we have made on sanitation....Honors for being the youngest and undoubtedly the prettiest home plumber goes to 16-year-old Roxanne Biktimir who lives with her mother, Mrs. Phyllis Biktimir, and sister Tuvana, at 2822 Boyer E. Roxanne read a plumber's guide, drafted plans, practiced with the tools and installed a copper job that impressed Inspector Ed Dressell. She brushed off a suggestion to enter the plumber apprenticeship program and will enter the U of W this fall on a musical scholarship....It might cool you off to know the Fourth Annual Christman Cruise will be Wed., Dec. 20th. Mrs. Gladys Mattson (EA 2-2643) is chairman of the arrangements committee....The final count (18 members) is in on our first annual Membership Roll Call. We represent more than 80% of the owner-occupied floating homes which is something of a record for a voluntary organization.

FLOATING HOMES ASSOCIATION
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