



May 21, 2014

To: San Mateo County Harbor District President Robert Bernardo, Commissioners, Pietro Paravanno, James Tucker, Sabrina Brennan, William Holsinger

From: Half Moon Bay Seafood Marketing Association

RE: May 21, 2014 Agenda Item # 11- Wholesale Fish Handlers Leases: Update on Review of Lease Fees and Charges and Possible Next Steps

A Public Notice for applications for Fish Buying lease locations was issued by the SMCHD on 12/11/11, and the current leaseholders were awarded leases at the 6/6/12 SMCHD meeting. These leases and the fish buying fees associated with them have been the subject of Grand Jury requests, multiple closed session agenda items, and countless public comments over the past 2 ½ years without resolution.

We, the members of the Half Moon Bay Seafood Marketing Association are largely dependent on the fish buying businesses on Johnson Pier for the unloading and marketing of our catch. The sustainability and fairness of these leases for all three fish businesses, both in lease amounts due, and fees applied, have a direct impact on the commercial fishing fleet.

As stated in our letter to the SMCHD presented on July 17, 2013 (attached), we do not support fees that will ultimately be paid by fishermen. We do, however, support the owners of Morning Star Fisheries, Pillar Point Seafood, and Three Captains Seafood as these businesses have supported the fleet for decades. We expect our Harbor District to provide, legal, equitable, competitive and sustainable leases and lease locations for these leaseholders (and for all SMCHD leaseholders).

Unfortunately, based on the handling of this process thus far, we do not have confidence that these leases and fees can be successfully and fairly reviewed without the help of outside negotiators and without oversight to the process.

Therefore we respectfully request that the San Mateo County Harbor District create a transparent process for these leases and fees to be reviewed by an independent party.

Thank You
Half Moon Bay Seafood Marketing Association

cc: San Mateo County Supervisors: President Dave Pine, Carole Groom, Don Horsley, Warren Slocum, Adrienne Tissier, Sylvia Ortega Hunter Deputy Director of Department of Boating and Waterways, State Parks Director Major General Anthony L. Jackson.



July 17, 2013

To: San Mateo County Harbor District Commissioners
From: Half Moon Bay Seafood Marketing Association
RE: Fish Buying Fees at Pillar Point Harbor

The membership of the Half Moon Bay Seafood Marketing Association are not in favor of unloading or purchasing fees being assessed on fish buyers or unloaders in Pillar Point Harbor. Ultimately these fees will be paid by the fishermen, who cannot continually bear the burden of increased fees and decreased services by this harbor. These fees are not charged in other ports and we do not believe they should be levied here. Furthermore, we are not willing to provide fish landing receipts or any other proprietary information to fish buyers or to the harbor for the purposes of validating poundage offloaded or purchased.

Sincerely,

Geoff Bettencourt
Vice-President
Half Moon Bay Seafood Marketing Association