



Agenda Item #: _____

Staff Report

City of Manhattan Beach

TO: Honorable Mayor Montgomery and Members of the City Council

THROUGH: Geoff Dolan, City Manager

FROM: Lindy Coe-Juell, Assistant to the City Manager

DATE: November 5, 2008

SUBJECT: Presentation of an Annual Report for the Roundhouse Marine Studies Lab & Aquarium by the Oceanographic Teaching Stations, INC.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the City Council receive and file the presentation and report from the Oceanographic Teaching Stations, INC (OTS).

FISCAL IMPLICATION:

There is no fiscal implication associated with this action.

BACKGROUND:

The City and the OTS, a non-profit corporation, maintain an ongoing contract for the operation of the Roundhouse Marine Studies Lab & Aquarium (Roundhouse) located at the end of the Manhattan Beach Pier. The City provides for the operation, care, and custodial maintenance of the building that houses the Roundhouse and OTS staffs the Roundhouse, manages the aquariums, provides educational programs and manages the visitor programs.

OTS provides an annual report as a part of the contract agreement with the City. The 2008 OTS report is attached to this staff report. Board members from OTS will provide a brief presentation to City Council during the November 5th meeting and be available to answer questions and receive comments.

ATTACHMENT: OTS 2008 Annual Report

TO: MANHATTAN BEACH CITY COUNCIL

FROM: OCEANOGRAPHIC TEACHING STATIONS, INC. (OTS)

RE: ANNUAL REPORT to CITY

Oceanographic Teaching Stations, Inc. (OTS) operates the Roundhouse Marine Studies Lab & Aquarium on the Manhattan Beach Pier as a lessee of the City.

This is our 2008 annual report to the City Council.

This report is intended to feature our new programs, to recognize the financial assistance we have received from our community, and to thank the Council for the support the City staff has given us.

OTS' OPERATIONS:

OTS, a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, has operated the Roundhouse Marine Studies Lab & Aquarium since 1980. OTS maintains 13 sea water aquaria to display marine life that is native to Santa Monica Bay. Within the Roundhouse, OTS also has storage and lab areas, a pump room, a small library, an office area and a kids' corner.

OTS employs a staff to maintain the Roundhouse facility, to care for specimens, to teach classes, to train volunteers and to supervise public visits. OTS is open every day, except holidays, until sunset. OTS is financially supported by class fees, community donations and, increasingly, corporate and foundation grants. It is managed by a board of directors, all of whose members are local residents.

As a non-profit, OTS files returns each year with the California Attorney General, the Franchise Tax Board and the IRS. It carries public liability insurance for its operations.

OTS provides these benefits to our community currently:

1. Operates a public aquarium on the Manhattan Beach Pier, without charge to visitors and without any public financial subsidy, which provides classes to about 12,000 children annually and receives about 125,000 visits each year;
2. Provides **free** marine science classes to Manhattan Beach schools and other South Bay schools (to the 1st, 3rd, 5th grades, middle schools and high school biology classes) paid for by grants; and provides fee or free classes to other school districts throughout the County;

3. Cooperates in providing a volunteer outreach program for students at Mira Costa High School;
4. Promotes marine environmental awareness through its Roundhouse displays, school programs, recycling programs and internet information;
4. Gives recognition to financial sponsors including area employers (among them, Chevron, Mattel, Boeing, Skechers, Toyota, Raytheon, Murad, Rock 'n Fish and the Manhattan Beach merchants), community service groups (among them, Sandpipers, Manhattan Beach Property Owners Association), grant-making foundations and residents.

NEW PROGRAMS:

Beachwalker's Guide. OTS will publish a 40-page Beachwalker's Guide to describe birds, fish, crustaceans and other sea life found in local beaches and waters. The Guide will contain a photo and description for 32 ocean "critters." The Guide will be available for a \$2 donation in November.

Internet Site and Blog. The OTS internet site is: www.roundhouseaquarium.org. OTS recently added a blog as a link from its internet site, also having its own internet address: www.roundhouseaquarium.blogspot.com The internet site describes OTS' programs, and the blog carries articles and updates about OTS' activities.

Central Basin Water District. OTS for many years has provided one-hour classes for students visiting the water treatment facilities at West Water Basin. OTS has now commenced providing in-site education to middle and high school students in the geographical area serviced by the Central Basin Water District. For these classes, OTS personnel bring specimens to the high school to provide a hands-on experience.

Merchandise Sales. OTS recently entered into an agreement with an online merchandiser (Cafe Press). Cafe Press sells t-shirts, hooded sweat shirts and coffee mugs bearing the name Roundhouse Aquarium and Marine Science Lab and a photographic depiction of the Pier and Roundhouse. Cafe Press produces the products upon order and sells them at a price so that OTS will realize a 20% donation.

RECOGNITION FROM GRANT-MAKING ORGANIZATIONS:

OTS has received the generous support from foundations, corporations and community organizations. As OTS has built out its infrastructure, these donors have directed their grants to provide classes in marine biology to Title 1 School Districts

serving below median level income populations. OTS recently received an \$8,000 California Coastal Commission “Whale Tail” Grant, to be used also to subsidize classes provided to area school districts. The Boeing Employee Community Fund has granted to OTS \$30,000 as a Boeing Crystal Vision Award, of which \$10,000 has been used to purchase a projector for microscope slides, and \$20,000 will be used to subsidize classes to Title 1 Schools. The Annenberg Foundation has made successive contributions that were used to fund marine education in the Beach Cities and surrounding communities. The Manhattan Beach Property Owners Association has been a reliable contributor to OTS.

ASSISTANCE FROM CITY STAFF:

The City is the landlord of the Roundhouse. City employees have been very helpful to OTS with respect to Roundhouse maintenance issues. These City employees include: Juan Price, City Maintenance Supervisor, Colby Upston, City Maintenance Secretary, Garret Stephens, City Construction Supervisor and Howard Fishman, on the City’s Risk Management Staff.

Thank you, Manhattan Beach.

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Board members from OTS will be present when this report is submitted to the City Council and will be able to answer any questions or receive any comments that Council members may have.

Dated: October 19, 2008

Oceanographic Teaching Stations, Inc.
(By Dick Fruin, secretary)