



November 2, 2022

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Donnie Rosa - General Manager, Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT : **Stanley Park Train Status Update - Board Briefing Memo**

Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on the status of the rolling stock, the wheeled railway vehicles, at the Stanley Park Train.

Background

The train assets consist of four gas-powered locomotives and thirteen passenger carriages, manufactured in the 1960's, and are considered to be at/or nearing end-of-life. The carriages and three of the four locomotives were manufactured by Chance Rides in Wichita, Kansas while the fourth locomotive was manufactured locally. The vintage trains are prone to frequent engine problems and failures of ancillary systems, requiring numerous emergency call-outs to City of Vancouver's Fleet & Manufacturing Services (FMS) mechanics during the Stanley Park Train's signature Q4 extended events. FMS has been maintaining the rolling stock since 2012. Prior to that, an external contractor maintained the locomotives and a staff member, since retired, provided routine preventative maintenance for the passenger carriages.

The rolling stock and train track are inspected annually by Technical Safety BC (TSBC) to ensure compliance with safety regulations. This year's inspection was scheduled for early September, after summer operations closed for the season. The equipment failed to pass inspection and TSBC suspended the train's operating permit.

History of Recent Safety Inspections

From the time Bright Nights 2019 ended in January 2020 until May 2021, the attraction was closed to the public. Despite the pandemic closure, staff continued with annual safety inspections to maintain their operating permit. In 2020, though TSBC was not performing in-person inspections, the train was given a conditional pass based on information staff submitted in a BC Safety Pre-Operation Inspection Declaration. Staff were required to address any code violations that had been identified.

TSBC resumed in-person inspections in 2021 and the train received a conditional pass, contingent on the remediation of the non-compliant items. Train staff worked with the TSBC safety officer and FMS over several months to achieve compliance. FMS experienced significant staffing shortages during the pandemic, and the lack of capacity has persisted. The team is limited to addressing emergent issues, though they continue to work on remediation of any code violations found during safety inspections.

In the most recent inspection, the safety officer, citing problems with numerous passenger carriages, noted that the condition of safety-critical components in the trains was poor and issued a shutdown order. TSBC requested that the train engage a third party contractor with knowledge



of the specific manufacturing standards of the equipment to assess the entire fleet of locomotives and carriages, and to provide a condition report and remediation plan to return the trains to the manufacturer's minimum operating standards.

Follow up

While staff were able to address some deficiencies within the stipulated 30 day window, due to the very specific knowledge required of the third party contractor, staff experienced significant challenges locating a consultant able to perform the condition assessment. FMS was unable to assist with an external contact though did commit to supporting the remediation work that would follow the consultant's report.

Through TSBC, staff connected with a railway consultant on Vancouver Island who agreed to assist but was not available for another month due to other commitments. The delay led to the decision to cancel the Halloween Ghost Train, scheduled to open in early October and to focus efforts on having a working train in time for the Bright Nights event in December.

In subsequent discussions with the consultant, staff learned that the issues noted by TSBC would likely require significant resources and a lot of time to repair as there would be long waits for any parts needed from Chance Manufacturing. The possibility of sourcing parts through another manufacturer, also located in the U.S. was ruled out due to quality concerns. Staff continued to reach out to all known owners/operators of Chance trains in the Lower Mainland, including the Greater Vancouver Zoo and Richmond Country Farms, for other potential resources.

Focussing on the goal of having a working train for Bright Nights, staff decided, with TSBC's approval, to narrow the consultant's scope of work to identifying five carriages that could be made operable in the time available. However, on the eve of the scheduled assessment, the consultant was forced to step away from the project as he was unable to meet the COV's general liability insurance requirement for individual contractors. After consulting with COV Risk Management and HR, train staff determined that they could not move forward with engaging the consultant.

Next Steps

Train staff are working with FMS to navigate this next phase and have asked for TSBC's assistance. It is yet to be determined if TSBC will be amenable to lifting the third party contractor requirement if FMS is able to commit resources to a full assessment and condition report.

As the window of opportunity to put a train into service for Bright Nights has closed, staff are regrouping to support a holiday event featuring the Burn Fund's lights and décor displayed on the train concourse and in the farmyard. While staff are disappointed they cannot offer visitors their



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Page | 3

traditional holiday train rides, they're happy to help provide an event that will feature the many popular displays that have delighted guests for years.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Donnie Rosa (*they/she*)
General Manager - Parks and Recreation

/ry/jk

Copy to: PB Leadership Team
PB Communications
Fleet & Manufacturing Services CoV