



TRANSEUROPE MARINAS

Minutes of a meeting held online at 14:00 hours WEST / 15:00 CEST / 16:00 EEST on Tuesday,
20th July 2021.

1.0 JMG and MS welcomed members to the meeting, thanking managers for attending during a busy time of year.

In attendance:

Name

Jean-Michel Gagné (JMG) (Chairman)
Charles Bush (CB)
Roberto Perocchio (RP)
Maarten Desloovere (MD)
Renata Marevic (RM) (EU Treasurer)
Julien Lebas (JL)
Kerrie Gray (KG)
Stuart Jones (SJ) (UK Treasurer)
Covadonga Rodríguez (CR)
Antonio Valbuena (AM)
Melanie Symes (MS) (Secretary)

Marina

-
Mayflower Marina
Marina del Cavallino
VY Nieuwpoort
Marina Punat
Le Havre Plaisance
Poole Quay
Penarth Quays
Puerto Deportivo de Gijón
Alcaidesa Marina
-

Apologies received from:

Rob Vanderbergh
Wendy Stowe
Kevin Baird
Nienke Zetzema
Falk Morgenstern
Clinton Lyon

VNZ Blankenberge
Buckler's Hard
Bangor Marina
Jachthaven Waterland
MNA
Gillingham Marina

2.0 Minutes of the last meeting held on 20th April 2021 had not yet been read by any of the attending members and so approval was postponed until the next meeting.



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3.0 TEM membership matters

MS opened the discussion with an overview of the Pick a Pier (PAP) digital membership service, describing data showing that at least a third of members were already showing significant activity, with thousands of discounted nights being recorded across the network. Despite this, there were a number of members that had not yet activated their membership, and some were even reported to be refusing member access or discriminating against TransEurope boaters, in favour of non-members without applicable discounts. Further to this, problems were occurring where marinas were not responding to email requests generated via the system, leading to a proposal from Pick a Pier for commitment from members to a possible Service Level Agreement (SLA), to avoid negatively affecting both the success of the service and TEM/PAP brand awareness.

CB responded, describing an unprecedented demand on all types of berthing this year (resident and visitor), with marinas being inundated with enquiries but dealing with scarce availability, owing to the continued presence of long-term resident berth-holders who would normally be cruising in the Channel Islands and France during this period and the return of those who had been enjoying an extended cruising period in the Med and the Caribbean. This situation was exacerbated by a combination of other aspects of the pandemic and Brexit and increased resident activity, due to the staycation summer and the purchase of previously disused boats, resulting in higher labour requirements (cleaning, maintenance, etc.), which was in turn, creating difficulties for staff. Given the pressures on space and service delivery requirements, his advice was that TEM should be patient, and an SLA not considered until the “storm” had passed.

KG explained that her marina had the particular characteristic of hosting 85 visitors every night, each of whom could only stay for a maximum of 7 nights. They had also been inundated by requests and June had provided the best numbers seen by the marina over the last 10 years. As a result of this practice, Poole had often been able to offer space to boaters that couldn't find room in surrounding marinas.

RP agreed that managers had other priorities at present and couldn't be expected to take on new responsibilities for the time being. Of the same opinion, JMG added that the general trend, beyond common restrictions on international travel, was on shorter day-sailing and fewer long



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cruising trips, which was an issue that TransEurope should consider. RP also explained that marinas had been reducing staff over the last decade (since the last financial crisis), with the bulk of activity in marinas stemming from increasingly demanding residential use, heightened, of course, by the consequences of the pandemic.

MD suggested that winter could be an opportunity for members to contact their berth-holders and explain the basics of TransEurope, given that hopefully, next year, all of these existing and new residents would indeed be able to travel further afield and make use of their membership benefits.

SJ advised that the official PAP data might not reflect all of the current TEM activity, describing some marinas that were still using paper cards or not issuing digital codes, due in part to new managers who weren't aware of the new system, and management programmes so laborious, that staff simply didn't have time to open and use a second software to register TEM visitors, particularly when membership status was already a given with visitors arriving from sister or known nearby member marinas. As a consequence, there were likely to be a number of TEM visitors not being logged. He proposed that this year then should be considered as a settling-in process until the real data could be acquired, once all marinas were using the system correctly. He added that once paper cards were used up, there would be no recourse other than to use the digital system.

As a marina with a significant amount of success with the digital membership system, JL volunteered that he found Pick a Pier programme simple and effective, with TEM boaters being offered automatic reservation confirmation. Staff at Le Havre first registered visitors in the PAP system and then in their own system. His marina also dedicated time to communicating regularly with berth-holders and he was also using the Passport Escale system, encouraging berth-holders to announce their departures, creating more berthing capacity. JMG added that Passport Escale (PE) had been designed to be compatible with marina management software, easing the process, and that PE participant managers were financially incentivised to register customer absences. That said, he also admitted that the digital PAP system shouldn't be more



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laborious than the paper card system, since visitors would need to be logged anyway to control the use of discounted nights.

MS asked JMG, representing TransEurope in the ICOMIA Marinas Group (IMG), how members might be able to benefit from accessing more information about the current trends, in order to be better prepared. JMG explained that despite the current trends having emerged over the last couple of years, it made sense to analyse new expectations and behaviours early next year, once the situation was more settled, in order to confirm new patterns. RP, also a member of IMG, described how the staycation effect was clearly visible from the US to Turkey and Israel, with marinas full of residents putting pressure on marina resources and so making this a difficult time to propose any changes. This trend was likely to stay in place for the next couple of years and so conversations this winter might embrace new standards to be adopted within TEM, to demonstrate a level of customer service quality. He advised that these be “soft” standards, so as not to lead to a loss of members. MS suggested that these might include addressing the needs of more vulnerable boaters and offering them precedence when managing reservations.

RM revealed that amongst her customers, there was a tangible concern about new changes in COVID-related travel regulations, keeping people much closer to home or a marina base and that in general, they were less likely to spend a night out of the marina. She also described offering a financial incentive to her berth-holders to encourage them to confirm nights away from the marina in order to optimise the use of space and accept more visitors.

MS added that the new digital system also included a revenue-share absence report feature, that was already in use by some members. She informed members of a new proposal from Pick a Pier, whereby marina membership quotas could be digitised and payable into the relevant TEM accounts through the PAP platform. SJ suggested that whilst some marinas were still accepting paper cards, we should wait before proceeding, that said, he admitted that he would be delighted not to have to invoice members. Tracking payments was complicated since the payee didn't always correspond to the name of the marina. JMG was not sure that this was the role of a third party and described scenarios that might inconvenience customers arriving at a



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marina that was no longer a member. MS suggested that the criteria for halting membership benefits would have to be carefully thought through to avoid this. EU Treasurer RM agreed with SJ; it was hard to identify payments, but this was maybe a move to start next year, when more marinas were in the system as indeed this would be a far better and easier solution for billing. It was decided to delay the decision until at least the next meeting.

MS mentioned industry news having reported that Universal Marina had been bought by Premier Marinas and asked whether members had heard from Universal in this respect. KG mentioned that Poole Quay was still receiving a stream of visitors from Universal and as such staff at Poole weren't even aware of any change of ownership.

4.0 Southampton Boat Show

On the topic of the Southampton meeting, JMG described expecting that there would be fewer members present than normal, it being unlikely, for example, that French members would join given the current quarantine restrictions. KG and CB said that they had both exchanged their stands to join the TYHA stand. MD added that he didn't expect to attend the show as usual, given the current quarantine situation.

Based on a low predicted turn-out, and the ease of online meetings, it was ultimately decided to hold the next meeting online, after the Genoa and La Rochelle boat shows, at 14:00 WEST on the 5th October.

JMG thanked members for joining the meeting and wished everyone a successful season.