

Walking the Extra Mile For
The Youth of Puerto Galera



The Puerto Galera Fortnightly JOURNAL

Volume 4 No. 4 Sept. 16-30, 2006 A PGOnline Publication

Council mulls support on wind power project

“THE COUNCIL would like to know more about the multi-million dollar wind energy project before they endorse it,” says Vice Mayor Johnny Ascan, last September 5 public hearing.

The Vice Mayor later referred the request of the Philippine Hybrid Energy Systems, Inc. (PHESI) for a Resolution endorsing their power project to the Committee on Environment, the Committee on Tourism and the Committee on Public Utilities.

Representatives from PHESI, ORMECO and the National Power Corporation (NPC) as well as representatives from various business organizations attended the public hearing.

The 3 Committees will recommend whether the Council should or should not pass a Resolution endorsing the project.

PHESI said that they will use the Resolution to secure the needed Environmental Compliance Certificate from the DENR which is a major requirement before PHESI can continue with the project.

PHESI

PHESI is the local subsidiary of Breezelectric, a Delaware Limited Liability Company located in San Diego, California which was formed in 2000. BreezElectric has developed a business model for supplying electricity for small grids on remote islands. This business model can reduce the cost of electricity by 10-20% using Hybrid Power Systems consisting of wind

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PHESI plans to install 10 Wind Turbine Generators stretching across 2 kilometers atop Tabinay.

Mayor Teo okays wastewater project

IT'S A GO for the 100-million peso wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) for Sabang.

Mayor Teo Atienza said that the facility is the answer to the pollution problem of the coastal waters especially in the Sabang area.

A DENR report in 2005 stated that the Sabang coastal water is contaminated with a high-degree of fecal coliform bacteria which cause various diseases and is mainly due to improper waste management.

On March 31, 2006, the local government of Puerto Galera signed a tripartite Memorandum of Agreement with the US-AID funded SCOTIA (Sustainable Coastal Tourism in Asia) and the Partnership for the Environmental Management of the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA). Under the agreement, the three parties will collaborate towards the construction of a sanitation system for Puerto Galera. SCOTIA will provide technical assistance for design and construction while PEMSEA will set up the financing system for private sector investment. The local government will provide the necessary ordinances and conduct public information campaign for local residents, resort owners, and other stakeholders.

PEMSEA's Public-Private Partnership (PPP) scheme will be the applied business structure.

Under the PPP-model, a private corporation which has the technical expertise and/or financial resources will be the partner of the local government which has the mandate to provide services and the power to levy taxes.

PEMSEA, last September 5, presented a report detailing the technical and financial requirements of the project as well as a timeframe of activities which

shall culminate in a January 2007 Contract Signing between the local government and the winning private sector partner.

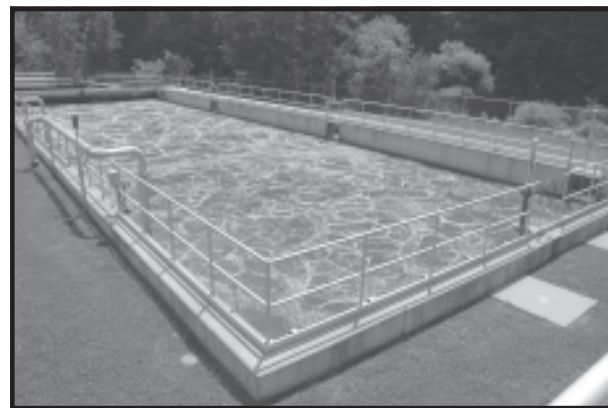
Money Matters

PEMSEA said that the investment into a wastewater treatment plant could be between 94 up to 100 million pesos.

The yearly operation and

even reported that more than 3 million tourists visited Puerto Galera last year.

PEMSEA added: “With the proposed 50-peso Environmental User Fee, the municipality will have sufficient financial resources to finance the project. Assuming 1 million tourists per year 100% collection efficiency, the town can collect 50 million



Wastewater Treatment Plant: Rectangular Aeration Tank

maintenance can go up to more than 12 million pesos.

Private investors and creditors will be tapped to finance the project.

PEMSEA said that, “the core issue is to make private investors comfortable in investing in Puerto Galera.”

PEMSEA suggested an Environmental Trust Fund which will reduce financial risk and make the project attractive to investors.

The Environmental Trust Fund will come from the Environmental User Fee (EUF) to be collected from tourists, households and establishment owners.

The proposed EUF for each tourist is 50 pesos. PEMSEA said that more than a million tourists visit Puerto Galera every year compared to the 430,000 tourists of Boracay. The Manila Times, a daily broadsheet,

pesos and double its existing budget.”

PEMSEA estimates “the present value of the EUF in the next 10 years is 349 million pesos at 50 pesos per tourist and 50% collection efficiency.”

This estimate makes the project viable and PEMSEA is confident that the project is capable of repaying the creditors, principal plus interest, in 10 years.

Timeframe

Mayor Teo said that “the ball is now in the hands of the Sangguniang Bayan”, referring to needed legislations that the Town Council must pass for the project to continue.

The Sangguniang Bayan has to pass an ordinance for the Environmental User Fee. This has to undergo a public hearing and once approved by the Council and the Mayor, will be sent

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So where will they put the Wastewater Treatment Plant?

PEMSEA SURVEYED the Sabang area and came up with 4 possible sites for the Wastewater Treatment Plant. It is up to Mayor Teo Atienza to decide which of the 4 will be the site. If the timeframe will be followed, the Mayor has until the end of September to figure this out.



Option 1 – Ridge top Small Lalaguna & Option 3 – Below option 1 empty lot behind Small Lalaguna



Option 2 – Cliffside of possible reclamation area in Sabang



Option 4 – Swamp area behind Big Lalaguna

Mayor Teo okays WWTP project...

to the Provincial Board for approval before it can be implemented.

Once the collection is underway, the Sangguniang Bayan needs to pass a resolution authorizing the Mayor to setup an Environmental Trust Fund. They also need to pass an ordinance for fees to be collected from households and establishments.

In the timeframe, all of the above must be accomplished before the end of September.

From October up to December, the government must brief the investors, hold a pre-bidding conference, conduct the bidding proper, evaluate the bids and select the winner.

By January 10, 2007, the Mayor is expected to sign a contract with the winner.

Site Selection

PEMSEA has identified 4 potential sites where the WWTP will be established. Mayor Teo must decide which of the 4 will be the location of the WWTP.

Option 1 and 3 are both located at the vacant lot behind Portofino Resort and near Mabuhay Beach Resort at Small Lalaguna.

Option 2 is located at the Cliffside of a proposed reclamation site in Sabang, near El Galleon Resort and Triton Dive Center.

Option 4 is in the swamp

area behind Big Lalaguna, near La Laguna Beach Club and the new Korean resort now under construction. (More on the 4 options, please see photos on the right)

All the potential sites are near established resorts and the Fortnightly have gathered information that the affected resort owners will do their best to block the WWTP in their respective areas. The main contention of the resorts revolves on the foul odor that will come out of the WWTP.

Willingness to Pay Issue

The Fortnightly have interviewed residents and business owners in White Beach and Poblacion who have voiced

their objection to the Environmental User Fee.

A White Beach business owner asks: “Why must we pay for Sabang’s mess?”

The majority of the tourists who come to Puerto Galera are local (Filipino) tourists and most of them go to White Beach. The millions of tourists who go to White Beach will, in effect, be paying for the wastewater treatment plant of Sabang.

PEMSEA said that White Beach and Poblacion will have their own sanitation projects but because of the high-cost involved, there is a need to prioritize and Sabang was selected as the first beneficiary.

(by: Noe Lineses)

Opinion:

WWTP: a catch-22?

PEMSEA should have identified and suggested only 1 site, the best site for the WWTP. Now, it would seem that the issue would be a political situation, where the popular saying “money talks, bullshit walks” takes on an entirely different meaning (if you get my drift, Chucky).

No resort would like a WWTP for a neighbor and it would not be a surprise if a resort owner will ask the Courts to intervene.

Another issue is the EUF. How will you explain to a Poblacion household that they need to pay a certain amount for a sanitation project in Sabang?

Similarly, why would White Beach resort owners support this project knowing fully well that the bulk of the money will come from tourists visiting White Beach?

How does a Wastewater Treatment Plant Works?

IN URBAN and suburban areas where people are packed closer together and where there is a lot more wastewater to treat, the community will construct a sewer system that collects wastewater and takes it to a wastewater treatment facility.

In the ideal case, a sewer system is completely gravity-powered, like a septic system. Pipes from each house or building flow to a sewer main that runs, for example, down the middle of the street. The sewer main might be 3 to 5 feet (1 to 1.5 m) in diameter. Periodically, a vertical pipe will run up from the main to the surface, where it is covered by a manhole cover. Manholes allow access to the main for maintenance purposes.

The sewer mains flow into progressively larger pipes until they reach the wastewater treatment plant. In order to help gravity do its job, the wastewater treatment plant is usually located in a low-lying area, and sewer mains will often follow creekbeds and streambeds (which flow naturally downhill) to the plant.

Normally, the lay of the land will not completely cooperate, and gravity cannot do all the work. In these cases, the sewer system will include a grinder-pump or a lift station to move the wastewater up over a hill.

Once the water reaches the wastewater treatment plant, it goes through one, two or three stages of treatment (depending on the sophistication of the plant). Here’s what each stage does:

The first stage, known as primary treatment, does the same thing a septic tank does. It allows the solids to settle out of the water and the scum to rise. The system then collects the solids for disposal (either in a landfill or an incinerator).

Primary treatment is very simple — it involves a screen followed by a set of pools or ponds that let the water sit so that the solids can settle out.

Primary treatment might remove half of the solids, organic materials and bacteria from the water. If the plant does no more than primary treatment, then the water is chlorinated to kill the remaining bacteria and discharged.

The second stage, known as secondary treatment, removes organic materials and nutrients. This is done with the help of bacteria — the water flows to large, aerated tanks where bacteria consume everything they can.

The wastewater then flows to settling tanks where the bacteria settle out. Secondary treatment might remove 90 percent of all solids and organic materials from the wastewater.

The third stage, known as tertiary treatment, varies depending on the community and the composition of the wastewater. Typically, the third stage will use chemicals to remove phosphorous and nitrogen from the water, but may also include filter beds and other types of treatment. Chlorine added to the water kills any remaining bacteria, and the water is discharged.



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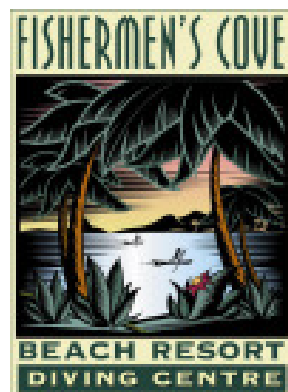
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Council mulls support on power project... from p.1

turbine generators operating reliably with diesel generators.

PHESI wants to put up a 30-million dollar (1.7-billion pesos) diesel-wind hybrid power facility in Oriental Mindoro. Oriental Mindoro Rep. Rodolfo Valencia said the planned 18-megawatt (MW) facility would give the province a much needed boost in its goal of becoming a major tourism hub in the country.

According to Breezelectric’s official website (www.breezelectric.com), the company’s planned diesel-wind hybrid in Oriental Mindoro would generate 14.5 MW from windmills and 3.6 MW from a diesel facility.

PHESI President Nicanor Villasenor, who personally presented the project in 2 public hearings, is an entrepreneur with extensive Philippine energy sector experience. He has successfully negotiated many contracts with the NPC in establishing fossil-fuel power plants.

SB Committees

The Tourism Committee will study if the project will contribute to the “uglification” of the landscape of Tabinay which has steadily attracted real estate developments targeting tourists and foreign retirees.

The Environment Committee will look at the effect of the proposed 10 towering wind turbine generators on the watershed area. Committee Chair Danny Enriquez said he will ask PHESI for a hydrology report and will also inquire on the level of noise that will be generated by each windmill.

The Committee on Public Utilities needs to find out how the PHESI project will benefit Puerto Galera electric consumers.

Although ORMECO publicly stated that because of PHESI, the electric bill will go down, it could not say whether the reduction will be significant as to rally support for the PHESI project.

ORMECO has the exclusive franchise to sell electricity to electric consumers in the province. So, even if PHESI will sell electricity to ORMECO for only 5 pesos per kwh, ORMECO’s tariff rate, nonetheless, is pegged at around 10 pesos per kwh.

While PHESI’s project is undeniably huge, ORMECO consumers are asking if the wind energy project is the solution to the recurring brownouts now plaguing the province.

Dr. Peter Lee of the University of Asia and the Pacific said that ORMECO has estimated that with the entry of PHESI, it may in the short term end up with more contracted power supply than demand.

“This situation may discourage new investors beyond the current players from entering until power demand has grown sufficiently...,” says Lee in his research paper entitled “Investment Prospects for the Oriental Mindoro Power Sector.”

EPIRA Law

The power industry is divided into 3 sectors, namely, generation, transmission and distribution. In 2001, the country passed Republic Act 9136, the Electric Power Industry Reform Act or EPIRA.

EPIRA provided for reforming the power industry and opens up the generation sector, formerly a government monopoly, to competition by the private sector. In the province, those involved in the generation sector are Mirant, Power One, NPC and ORMECO’s Dulangan Mini-Hydro. PHESI is aiming to be part of the generation sector.

NPC handles the transmission while ORMECO is in charge of distribution.

NPC is losing hundreds of million pesos by subsidizing the cost of electricity in Mindoro. NPC estimates that average cost in 2005 is P10.3 per kwh. On the other hand, NPC sells to Ormeco at only P4.06 per kwh. Thus, the NPC is keen to exit and allow new power providers like PHESI to enter.

Brownouts

ORMECO said that the entry of PHESI will not mean less power outages. Brownouts can occur in the generation, transmission or distribution portion.

If it is from the generation side, it means that there is problem with one or all of the 4 power producers. If there is a problem with the 69 KV Line (main supply line) or the feeder lines, then it is NPC’s responsibility. But if the brownout is caused by problems due to the distribution lines or transformers, then it is ORMECO’s problem.

Locsin issue

A side issue that came out in the public hearing was when ORMECO and NPC was asked how they can minimize the occurrence of brownouts, they replied that they need to settle there right-of-way issue with YCLA, a Locsin company that owns the land where the transmission lines of NPC had crossed.

YCLA is asking the Court of Appeals for “just compensation.” NPC could not energize the lines because of the right-of-way issue. ORMECO said that once the issue is resolved, they can establish 3 feeder lines which will reduce brownouts. Electricity will be redistributed through the 3 feeder lines. One will go to Poblacion, another to Sabang and another to White Beach. NPC said that the 3-feeder lines setup will mean that “if there is a brownout in Sabang, White Beach and Poblacion will still have power.”

Councilor Danny Enriquez, who is also an employee of the Locsin family, said that they thought that the lines that traversed the YCLA property are being used already and that they are not hampering the activities of NPC.

Henry Arago, a Muelle businessman, said that the people of Puerto Galera should ask the Town Council to help the NPC settle their dispute with the YCLA so that the 3 feeder lines will be operational.

Other Investors

Congressman Valencia said that aside from PHESI, the province is also negotiating with the Spanish government for possible aid in exploring the province’s hydropower potential.

“There are four hydropower projects that we’re looking at, that Mindoro can do,” he said.

Geothermal power, he said, could be another area of development as studies have shown that the province has the potential to yield 20 MW of power from geothermal sources.

On the transmission side, Dr. Peter Lee, said Kepco Philippines Corp. had committed to build a submarine cable that would connect Oriental Mindoro to the Luzon grid.

Kepco will be advancing \$50 million to bankroll the implementation of the submarine cable project.

Electric Council

Mayor Teo Atienza recently formed the Municipal Electric Council to be the town’s main advisory body on matters related to electricity.

Elected Chairman is Ex-Mayor Herming Atienza who was a former General Manager of ORMECO.

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Noe Lineses SILVER BULLET

Much Ado About Nothing

So what was the 3-hour public hearing on the “Two-Points of Entry Ordinance” all about? Now it appears that after all the ruckus, the Council will go back to the dreaded “One-Point of Entry Scheme”. This after Vice Governor Estee Aceron said that municipality can, in fact, already implement the “Balatero Pier Only Ordinance”.

And then comes this malicious tittle-tattle around town. The Fortnightly reported on the statements made by the Vice Governor. We could not write things beyond the facts (and what was actually said), so we published the article when the Vice Governor told Vice Mayor Johnny Ascan that the One-Point of Entry Ordinance” was approved. Those that doubt this can ask the Vice Governor why she said that, not us.

Personally, I believe that the point-of entry ordinance will never see the light of day, at least, not during the term of the present administration, for 3 compelling reasons.

One, the declaration of some influential business groups to fight the ordinance hand and hand with the shipping operators.

“It’s a war,” says one resort owner who thinks the measure will kill the booming tourist industry. With such strong feelings against the ordinance, the ship owners will have formidable allies who are ready to spend whatever it takes to defeat the local government. Expect legal challenges one after another.

The second reason is ensconced in the idea that a “last termer” Mayor will not have the political will to implement the ordinance. So much more, if he anointed a relative to succeed him and the election is just around the corner.

It can also be a catch-22 situation. If he does not “do” it, then his “Great Benefactor” might anoint a person who can “do” the job.

There are clear signs that a “good excuse” will be used so the powers that be can dilly-dally, at least after the election. For example, a recent request to the national government to allocate more funds for Balatero, can be interpreted as a move to “save face” gauging correctly the strength of the opposition and a clear message to the “Great Benefactor” – help my candidate or else.

The third reason is the Council’s tenuous stand on the One-Point of Entry ordinance. It has allowed itself to be bullied into submission ending-up with the “Two-Points of Entry” version. Now the latest is some Councilors are contemplating on a three-point of entry scheme including White Beach.

The Mayor in all these has the best cards in play. He can go either way and win in both directions. This thing is only possible in Puerto Galera. There are many “loud” people in town but when the time comes they keep away and hide, making this place an astute politician’s Dream World.

The business community should stop hiding from its shell during elections. If you want to get rid of the vine, pluck it from its roots. There are many ways you can participate without putting your business at risk, so many ways to skin a cat.

Going back, this 4-year long Mexican-Telenovela-like ordinance is no longer amusing. It must have an ending whether it will just be “much ado about nothing”.

The Puerto Galera Fortnightly Journal

Published by PGOL Printing Press
Telefax: 043-287-3101
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Conversations with Nicky

Nicanor Villaseñor, who wants to be called Nicky, is the president of the Philippine Hybrid Energy Systems, Inc. or PHESI, a corporation that will invest 1.7 billion pesos for a wind power project in Mindoro.

In various conversations with Nicky, the following information, which was lightly discussed in the recent public hearings, came out and which we are happy to share with the public.

Q: Why did you choose Tabinay, Puerto Galera to be the site of the wind farm?

Nicky said that they conducted a survey, made a comprehensive scientific study and concluded that in the area of Tabinay, there is sufficient wind power throughout the year and can produce more than 18 MW of electricity. The study lasted for 2 years.

Q: But according to the Department of Energy, there is wind energy potential in Bulalacao, why Puerto Galera?

Nicky said it would not be financially viable because there is no 67 KV line (main line) that runs all the way to Bulalacao and that they would have to spend for the lengthy interconnection which would make the financial requirement much bigger.

Q: Can you explain how Hybrid Energy System works?

According to their website, there are two components which are constantly “talking” to each other. PHESI’s wind farm needs to link up with a conventional power producer which will provide the second component, a diesel-fed power plant.

When the Wind Turbine Generators sense that there is not enough wind power, the diesel generators will power-up to increase capacity. Similarly, if there is too much wind energy, the diesel generators will decrease capacity.

PHESI is talking with Power One for the latter’s diesel generators to provide back up and to follow the load for its wind generators.

Q: What is your arrangement with ORMECO?

Nicky said that they already have a contract with ORMECO. PHESI will sell 42,000 MWh to ORMECO and 10,000 MWh for ORMECO, the electric cooperative of Occidental Mindoro.

PHESI will supply 24% of the Purchased Power Annual Demand of ORMECO.

Q: How will Puerto Galera benefit from this?

Nicky said that the obvious benefit would be the reduced energy cost. PHESI will sell electricity to ORMECO for 5 pesos per kwh.

Nicky also outlined the benefits to various parties, to wit:

- ☺ The Project will reduce the NPC-SPUG Subsidy by PHP 2+/kWh, approximately PHP 120 Million/year.



Nicky Villaseñor, new in town but willing to answer questions

- ☺ The Project will reduce the cost of energy by approximately PHP 100 Million per year.
- ☺ The Project will provide funds to bring electricity to Barangay Baclayan and Tabinay.
- ☺ The Project will pay substantial property and business taxes that directly benefit the Provincial and local governments.
- ☺ The Project will create many jobs and a need for housing, food, entertainment, etc during the 18 months of construction and 25 years of operation.
- ☺ The Project will give priority in local hiring and purchase supplies locally when available
- ☺ The Project will attract tourists to Mindoro and Puerto Galera to see the wind Project.
- ☺ The Project will also attract new investments/businesses as the Power/Energy Infrastructure improves.
- ☺ The Project will increase the availability of energy and reduce the cost for new business.

Q: Is it possible for Puerto Galera to get its electricity directly from your wind farm?

“The energy from the Project goes first to the Grid and then to Puerto Galera as it is now. This ensures that Puerto Galera has a reliable supply of energy at all times, not just when the wind Project is operating.”

Nicky also said that it is “technically possible” for Puerto Galera to connect directly to their power plant. However, this will only be possible if ORMECO allows this to happen, and if ORMECO will establish a feeder line which connects Puerto Galera to their wind power plant.

Q: Have any environmental organizations indicated support for the Project?

“The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) will support and endorse the Project and will act as an advisor to the Project.”

Q: Are the wind turbines noisy?

“They produce very little and low frequency noise at the generators, but since the generators are 80 meters in the air, and the site is at least 2 km from habitable areas, there should be little or no audible noise in habitable areas.”

Q: Are the wind turbines new or used?

“The wind turbines are new, state-of-the-art equipment with special electronics and control systems; they have an expected reliability greater than 97%.”

Q: Why does the Project need an Environmental Compliance Certificate?

“All energy projects are reviewed by the DENR to determine the impact on the environment. Even though the Project will substantially reduce pollution from diesel generators, the Project must prepare an Environmental Impact Study to obtain an ECC from the DENR. Without the ECC, the Project cannot operate and generate electricity.”

Q: When will the Project begin construction?

“Depending on how soon we can secure governmental permits and approvals, the Project is scheduled to begin construction by early 1st quarter of 2007 and start operation in late 2008.”

Q: Is the delay in obtaining local and Provincial approvals impacting the schedule?

“Yes, the Project cannot apply to the ERC for approval of the Energy Sales Agreement without local and Provincial approvals, so each day of delay will delay the Project by a minimum of one day. If we delay into the rainy season, the construction schedule may be delayed by months, not days.”

Q: How do you intend to address the many concerns being raised about your project?

Nicky said he is new in Mindoro and will be happy to answer all the questions regarding his project.

Nicky said he will come to meetings to explain the nitty-gritty of the project but hopes he can get the endorsement as soon as possible.

SB: No more lewd shows for girlie bars

THE SANGGUNIAN Bayan (SB) recently conducted a public hearing on the proposed ordinance imposing new regulations on the adult entertainment industry.

One of the regulatory provisions is disallowing lewd shows inside the girlie bars.

The law requires the SB to conduct public hearings to hear the side of the affected sector before an ordinance can be approved.

Expectedly, employees of several girlie bars trooped to the August 29 public hearing to present their strong objection on the proposed ordinance. Broadway Disco, Centrum Disco, Sabang Disco, Sunshine Disco and Philippine Village Disco each submitted a position paper opposing the ordinance.

Surprisingly, however, none of the bars in Poblacion and White Beach presented a position on the issue. In fact, most of the bar owners in Poblacion did not even show up at the public hearing.

One of the reasons why Councilor Minda Justiniano drafted the ordinance was because of the many “videoke bars” that have opened up in Poblacion. Some of these bars are allegedly prostitution fronts.

Catholic Church leaders, teachers, Barangay leaders and even Mrs. Peachy Atienza, wife of Mayor Teo Atienza, praised Councilor Justiniano and the Council for coming up with the ordinance.

Councilor Raffy Cataquis clarified that the government will not close down the “nightlife” bars but will regulate the activities that will be allowed inside the bars.

However, a foreign customer of one of the girlie bars said that without the “show”, going to the bars will not be as “exciting” as before.

“What will the girls do, walk back and forth or just stand for 20 minutes on the stage?”

The ordinance also prohibits the “girls” from doing “provocative sexy dance”.

The oppositors

The points raised by the girlie bars are as follow:

- 1. A big percentage of the community benefits from the nighttime entertainment.
- 2. Alternative livelihood should first be provided.
- 3. The bars follow all the municipal regulations.
- 4. The bars do no not accept Puerto Galera residents to become entertainers.
- 5. There is regular check-

up for the “girls”.

6. There will be more “unregulated girls” if the bars will be closed and sexually transmitted diseases will be widespread.

7. The closure of the bars will mean more criminal acts and poverty.

8. The second reason why tourists go to Sabang is because of the bars and the girls.

9. The bars provide alternative entertainment, things to do for tourists.

10. The bars also attract investors and business interests in tourism.

One of the bars not associated with the Koreans made an extraordinary appeal.

“This is not what we expect from you when you were asking for our support (votes)... there are other problems of the town that you should worry about. Why don’t you solve these problems and do not bother us with this ordinance.”

The supporters

Councilor Minda Justiniano, who chairs the Committee on Women, gained the admiration and support of various organizations and the Catholic Church.

Rafael Romey, President of the Parish Pastoral Council, said that the Church fully supports

the ordinance. He is, however, worried “because some ordinances do not get implemented”.

Erlyn Corrales, President of the Catholic Women’s League said that the main purpose of the ordinance is to stop prostitution and to uplift the moral values of the people.

Mrs. Peachy Atienza, President of the Women’s Group, said that there are many women who are complaining that their husbands are going to the bars.

Mrs. Atienza suggested that there should be a provision for the “strict monitoring” of the bars. The Councilors replied that they will create a task force.

Editorial:

The draft ordinance authored by Councilor Minda Justiniano is a work in progress.

There are many “things” in the ordinance that need to be revisited. The ordinance must encompass the regulation of the entire adult entertainment industry and provide for the licensing of such businesses. It should also provide standards of the conduct and operation and lastly, establish criminal offenses and penalties for violation of the ordinance.

We cannot help but be amazed at the courage shown by the Councilor considering the many issues associated with this ordinance. Indeed, she would lose a lot of votes especially from those benefiting from the girlie bars. Cynics would say that the ordinance will not be implemented and this brouhaha is all for naught.

The good Councilor said that she welcomes inputs for the improvement of the ordinance. We will be happy to make recommendations as we share your campaign, *Konsehala*, to upgrade the moral values of the community.

Lest we forget, this all started when so-called “videoke bars” began invading Poblacion which shocked the sensibilities



A Sabang entertainer in action

of Catholics and various women’s groups. The good thing that came out of this is that out of the blue, Church leaders sprung into action to support a worthy cause. However, as of this writing, despite the obvious opposition of the Church, the bars in Poblacion continue to thrive.

To a foreigner this may sound naïve. It is apparent from the speeches at the public hearing that the Councilors will turn a blind eye to what happens in Sabang but will not tolerate a business of ill-repute to open shop in Poblacion. Simply put, Poblacion is Puerto Galera’s Rome, the Church backyard. Comprendre?

If I may be so bold, but videoke bars are suppose to be wholesome. The first indicator that there is hanky-panky is when a bar allows a waitress to entertain a patron whilst she sits with a lady’s drink. The more audacious sign is when a

bar offers a girl for “take-out” in lieu of a bar fine.

Councilor Justiniano, the videoke bars are much less complicated than the Sabang bars. The activities are more revealing, hence, can easily be regulated and most, if not all, are located in conservative Poblacion.

Again, let us congratulate Councilor Justiniano for a job well done. We need Councilors who make a stand no matter how unpopular it can be. May your tribe increase.

This may not come as a surprise to many, but the Municipal Government do earn millions of pesos from the adult entertainment industry.

Aside from the usual Mayor’s Permit, Health Clearance, etc., an entertainer is also required to undergo weekly medical check-up (PAP smear to be exact). The municipality expects to earn 2 million pesos from laboratory fees this year.



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Puerto Galera: One Of The Most Beautiful Bays In The World

The Philippines is blessed with thousands of kilometers of coastline. It is but natural to say that we possess some of the most beautiful seaside areas in the world – and as recently as last year we proved it.

Puerto Galera, located on the northern part of the island of Mindoro, was named 2005's Most Beautiful Bay by the Paris-based *Les Plus Belles Baies Du Monde* (The most Beautiful Bays in the World) club. A popular vacation spot, known for its beautiful beaches and proximity to the nation's capital, joins 29 other bays from different countries in the prestigious list.

Puerto Galera, which means "Port of the Galleon" is a series of landlocked coves. The bay's formation makes it an ideal and safe docking area for seafaring vessels. Its past is riddled with stories about Chinese and Spanish ships that traded with the native Mangyans and sheltered in the bay. A gold and marble mining industry provided income throughout the centuries. It's great diversity of marine life perfect for scuba diving, it's protected mangroves and rain forest mountains are testament to the island's unique ecosystem.

The club, a UNESCO-supported, non-government organization, bestowed the title to Puerto Galera last April 2, 2005 during its general assembly in Na Thrang, Vietnam. The chosen bays worldwide are known for their natural beauty, diverse marine life, rich cultural heritage and important contribution to the local economic activity. These factors are in line with the club's aim to promote, protect, and enhance the world's most beautiful bays and to enhance the area's sustainable economic development through preservation of its natural resources. The protection and conservation of these identified assets are for the benefit of future generations

Businessman and French expat Hubert d'Aboville was the main driving force behind the movement to get Puerto Galera on the international map. With the assistance of Councilor Daniel Enriquez, they were able to make a presentation to the club for the inclusion of Puerto Galera in the list. The main objective of the move was to harness the inevitable power of development and focus it on one goal: Puerto Galera, and the nation as a whole, should benefit from this natural tourist destination.

D'Aboville and Enriquez mapped out their plan and presented it to the town's leading families and businesses. The plan was well received by everyone together with the local government where it was approved upon first reading.

In a course of six months' work, with the support of the municipality and private enterprises, d'Aboville set off for Morocco to present Puerto Galera to the clubs' selection committee.

All of that hard work paid off. A resounding "yes" was heard from the selection committee, making Puerto Galera one of the world's finest bays.

"It's just like opening a jewelry box," says d'Aboville, portraying his 25-year romance with Puerto Galera. Call-



ing this municipality by the sea his home since 1995, d'Aboville was given the title of Adopted Son of Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro, last June 8, 2005.

On October 5, 2006, a photo exhibit representing all 30 most beautiful bays in the world will be organized at UNESCO in Paris. Its President Jerome Bignon, a French congressman, together with Bruno Bodard, secretary general of the world association, are finalizing all details.

Thanks to Ambassador H. E. Jose Zaide, the Philippine embassy in France, for his efforts to make this project a reality.

Visit the The most beautiful bays in the world Club website at www.world-bays.com.



Congratulations to Puerto Galera for becoming one of the most beautiful bays in the world.

Special thanks to Mr. Hubert d'Aboville for his hardwork and representation. You are truly an adopted son of Puerto Galera.

Thank you also to Mayor Aristeo Atienza, Vice Mayor Johnny Ascan and the Sangguniang Bayan especially Councilor Danny Enriquez for all their wonderful efforts to safeguard the natural beauty of Puerto Galera Bay.

The Most Beautiful Bays of the World

- 1) Argentina – Valdes Peninsula
- 2) Brazil – Todos Los Santos Bay
- 3) Brazil – Praia da Rosa
- 4) Cap Verde Islands – Mindelo Bay
- 5) Canada – Baie des Chaleurs
- 6) Chile – Megellan's Strait
- 7) England – St. Ives and Mount Bays
- 8) España – Bahia de Santander
- 9) Corsica – Girolata and Porto Gulf (France)
- 10) France – Mont St. Michel Bay
- 11) France – Morbihan's Gulf/Quiberon's Bay
- 12) France – Somme Bay
- 13) Germany – Westerland Sylt
- 14) Guadeloupe – Saintes Bay (France)
- 15) India – Backwaters
- 16) Ireland – Bantry Bay
- 17) Madagascar – Diego Suarez Bay
- 18) Morocco – Agadir – Taghazout Bay
- 19) Mexico – Banderas Bay
- 20) Montenegro – Kotor Bay
- 21) Norway – Geiranger Fjord
- 22) Philippines – Puerto Galera Bay
- 23) Portugal – Setubals Bay
- 24) Quebec – Tadoussac Bay (Canada)
- 25) Senegal – Sine Saloum Bay
- 26) South Africa – Table Bay & False Bay
- 27) Turkey – Bodrum Bay
- 28) USA – San Francisco Bay
- 29) Vietnam – Ha-Long Bay
- 30) Vietnam – Nha Trang Bay

Talk of the Town

PG’s Urgent Care Clinic gets underway with more pledges of support

ED: Ms. Donna of the PGYC wrote the minutes of the August 30 meeting regarding the Urgent Care Clinic (UCC) which we are happy to publish in this newspaper. The UCC is the brainchild of Bernd Keller, a retired German who after the unfortunate death of another expat developed the idea with American Bill Lutt, Eleanor Evangelista and Dr. Oscar Evangelista.

The four of them have been instrumental in the initial stages of the Urgent Care Center for Puerto Galera.

Definition: An Urgent Care Center is defined as a facility that can provide emergency care, life stabilization/saving and then evacuation/relocation to the appropriate on-going care center.

To date more than US\$500,000 worth of medical equipment (approx. 95% of estimated equipment needs for the clinic) has been donated. This includes an X-ray machine and an ambulance. Most of this equipment has been donated by Knightsbridge International. It is being shipped to Manila from the US by American President Lines and will be transported from Manila to Puerto Galera by Mr. Stan Hilker.

Land is required for the clinic building and people have already expressed interest in donating land to build the center on. After initial investigation, Balatero is proposed as being the best and most central location to cover areas from Sabang to Talipanan. It also offers the best solution in providing helicopter access.

Whilst it is envisaged that the ambulance will be located at Muelle for road transport to the UCC, a speed boat will be needed to provide transport from eg Sabang to Balatero.

Approximately P2.5-3 million will be needed to cover construction costs for the clinic. It was noted that the equipment has already been donated and needs to be housed. It was also pointed out by Roger Bigler that immediate assistance may be better served by money being channeled into equipping a speedboat with immediate life saving support needs. The speedboat would then be able to transfer a patient directly to Batangas (weather permitting). One time donations along with subscriptions are needed to finance these requirements. It was noted that the proposed location would be better if it had road, sea and air access.

Running costs of approximately P150,000 per month need to be covered also. It is proposed that this could be covered by subscription by individuals and resorts. Subscribers would receive free treatment and only pay for medicine. Non-subscribers would be required to pay for treatment and medicine. The provincial Governor has offered to provide 1 doctor and 1 nurse.

Steve Fleming of Big Apple indicated he would be prepared to assist with training in diagnostics.

Bill Lutt will prepare and distribute a draft mission statement, Q/A sheet, Budget and time line. (END of the minutes)



Bernd Keller and Bill Lutt explain what a UCC is all about

The UCC is a wonderful project, kudos to the people behind it. Just a thought: Why not involve the local government in the UCC? You already got the Governor to say yes to a doctor and a nurse.

I would like to think that one of reasons why no money was allocated from the Economic Development Fund for either Sabang or White Beach was because no one asked for money. This is a worthwhile project that the government can easily allocate a million pesos. No harm in trying, right? After all, it’s our money.

The UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines came to town recently to conduct an environment audit. It was unfortunate that the Mayor was not around.

I am not quite sure what the objectives were. We spent a whole day with a group of

distinguished scientists telling us what is clearly obvious, the uglification of Puerto Galera and the destruction of its natural assets.

The September 7 workshop was actually the third; I was present in the first held in April 1997 as well as in the second workshop held in October 2002. After leafing through the files, guess what I found out. Same results in 1997. For example, 10 years ago, we were already talking about the helter-skelter development, poor zoning or no zoning at all, same hullabaloes on the degradation of the marine environment, improper waste management et cetera.

Matigas talaga ang ulo ng taga-Puerto Galera o sadyang walang paki-alam kung masira ang kalikasan.

Danny Enriquez has been very active

lately. He authored an ordinance giving “rewards” to people who will paint their roof green or brown. Danny argued the said colors will blend with the landscape.

Under the draft ordinance, a resident who paints his roof green will be exempted from paying real property tax for a full year.

Years ago the Sangguniang Bayan passed a resolution asking residents to paint their roof green or brown. They wanted to use a much stronger word such as “directing all residents” but then that would have gone contrary to the Constitution. Well, as expected, those that wanted other colors, just simply ignored the request.

Danny, if the Mayor paints his roof green or brown, will he also get a reward?

Beep! Beep! Another text message. Councilor Danny Enriquez is in the Public High School with Municipal Assessor Cesar Axalan. So off I go to see what the two were up to.

There were a hundred students who attended a Bonsai-making lecture courtesy of the strange duo. Danny’s dream is for the students to make Puerto Galera, a Bonsai capital of the Philippines.

Cesar, on the other hand, is a Bonsai aficionado who after wowing the students with his “leaf-singing” talent taught the students how to make a Bonsai plant.

A Bonsai would make an excellent souvenir, one that last for ages and one that is worth maraming dollars.

Good job, Danny!

Bukas na Liham para kay Mrs. Cecilia Y. Locsin

Dear Mrs. Locsin,

Kami po na bumubuo ng samahan ng mga negosyante at residente ng Sitio Muelle, ay nais magpaabot sa inyo ng aming saloobin at kaisipan ukol sa natanggap naming sulat at survey form petsa Hulyo 14, 2006, na nagsasaad.

Na ang inyong kumpanya “Locsin Group of Companies” ay siya na ngayong mangangasiwa sa lahat ng ari-arian ng Pamilya Quinto kasama ang lahat na establisyemento nasasakop ng Munisipyo dito sa Muelle.

Kaming lahat ay nabigla sa pangyayaring ito, halong pagkalito, pangangamba, at galit ang aming nararamdaman.

Hindi namin inaasahan na kami ay makatanggap ng ganitong sulat galing sa inyo, gayong hindi namin naiintindihan ang namagitan sa inyo ng Quinto Family. Kung ang lupa bang kinatatayuan ng aming tirahan at establisyemento ay inyo ng pag-aari, o rerentahan lamang?

Nakakalungkot isipin na sa napakahabang panahon naming pamamalagi at paghahanapbuhay sa lugar na ito, kami pala ay binalewala lamang ng mga kinauukulan. Hanggang sa ngayon wala pa rin linaw kaming nakikita, at si Mr. Robustiano Quinto ay umiiwas sa amin at ayaw kaming harapin at kanya ring itinanggi ang kanyang paglagda sa nasabing liham.

Hinihiling namin sa inyo na ilahad ninyo sa amin ang inyong balak na proyekto para sa Muelle. Malaking katanungan sa amin ang koneksyon ng pagpapaalis ng mga pampasahero sasakyan pandagat sa Muelle Pier at ang inyong pamamahala ng ari-arian ng Quinto Family dito sa Muelle.

Kayo po ay kilala bilang aktibo sa pangangalaga ng natural na yaman at kalikasan. Napakalaki ng inyong kontribusyon sa pananatili ng kagandahan at pangangalaga ng kalikasan. Gayunpaman, kaming lahat na nakatira dito sa Muelle ay may malaking malasakit sa ating kalikasan, sa abot ng aming makakaya. Kasama kami sa pangangalaga sa ating kalikasan. Ayaw naming gumaya sa ibang lugar na pinababayaan magdumi ang baybay-dagat. Kasama kami sa mga programa kagaya ng Coastal Clean Up, sumusunod kami sa regulasyon ng munisipyo sa pagkakaroon ng 2 chamber septic tank, sa paghihiwalay sa nabubulok at di nabubulok na basura, higit sa lahat kami ay nagkakaisa para sa magandang layunin at sa ikakataguyod ng bayang Puerto Galera.

Kaya’t kung ano pa man ang naiisipan ninyong proyekto, at kung ito ay para sa kapakanan ng lahat, gusto naming mapabilang at hindi dapat binabalewala. Karapatan naming malaman kung ano man ang inyong pinaplano para sa Muelle.

Lubos na gumagalang,

Bumubuo ng Muelle Bay Traders Association, Inc.

Walking the Extra Mile For
The Youth of Puerto Galera



The Puerto Galera Fortnightly JOURNAL

Tax Exemption Seminar

If you want to find out how to legally get an exemption from Income taxes, then you should not miss this. The Barangay Micro Business Enterprise (BMBE) Seminar will be held on September 26, 2006. None other than Vice Governor Estee Aeron will speak about the BMBE. Representatives from the BIR, the Department of Trade

& Industry, Department of Labor & Employment and members of the Sangguniang Bayan will come to enlighten us on the BMBE Law.

Huwag kalimutan. September 26, 2nd floor Public Market at 1 pm. Sponsored by the NGBCC and the Rotary Club of Puerto Galera and the Puerto Galera Fortnightly.

PGA Grand Alumni Celeb, itinakda

Itinakda kamakailan ang 40th Grand Alumni Celebration ng Puerto Galera Academy. Napiling araw ang ika-17 ng Pebrero bilang araw ng mga Anak ng PGA.

Nagbuo ng mga komitiba na siyang tututok sa mga paghahandang gagawin.

Napili si G. Noe Linesses bilang Chairman ng Executive Committee.

Sari-saring pakulo ang inihahanda, kasama na ang isang Misa, parada ng mga Anak ng PGA, Ballroom at Fireworks Display.

Kung ikaw ay may mga ideya kung paano

pa mapapaganda ang selebrasyon, pwede kang mag-text sa 0926-8484500. Kailangan namin ang tulong ng lahat.

Kung ikaw ay may panahon at gusto mong makibahagi sa paghahanda para sa nasabing okasyon, umatend ka sa meeting tuwing huling Sabado ng buwan. Mag-text ka para malaman mo kung saan at anong oras ng meeting.

“Kung ikaw ay anak ng PGA, umaasa kami na makikibahagi ka sa paghahanda sa natatanging selebrasyon sa 2007. Ipakita ang pagmamahal sa ating Alma Mater.”

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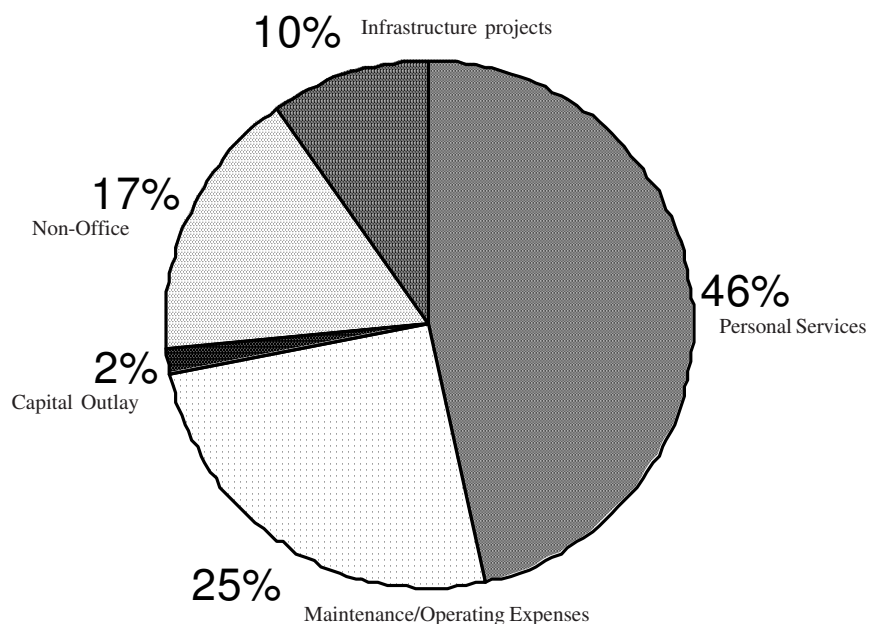
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2006 Govt Expenditures Pie Chart



The Total Budget for 2006 is more than 51 million pesos. In 2007, it could double or triple once they implement the Environmental User Fee Ordinance and the One-Point of Entry Ordinance.

46% - Personal Services, includes Salaries, Bonuses and Other Fringe Benefits.

25% - Maintenance & Operating Expenditures includes Training & Travelling Expenses, Maintenance of Govt Buildings & Facilities. A bit disconcerting is the amount allocated for landline telephone calls which is 468,000 pesos. One wonders, with that amount spent for telephone calls, it would probably mean that certain officials are spending a lot of time chitchatting on the phone.

17% - Non-Office Expenditures includes Loan Amortization for the public market, Calamity Fund, Peace & Order Fund. A tip to the Barangay Captains: ask for money for assistance to your Barangay Tanod, they have a 1-million peso allocation for peace & order. Another tip to the Barangay Captain: they have 2.5 million pesos in case there is a calamity - meant for victims of typhoons etc... Ask Delia Atienza, the Budget Officer how much is left of the Calamity Fund?

10% - Infrastructure Projects - Biggest chunk went to the Balete plaza.

2% - Capital Outlay includes purchase of computers and new vehicles.

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