There is a move being made to lease out berths 1, 2 ,3, & 4 to private concerns for operation. This seems to have moved forward quietly and quickly without much fanfare and even less detail available to the public. A consultant has been hired, an RFP has been sent out, and, as far as I know, responded to. The plan ,as I understand it, is for a select group, consisting of the Mayor, some council members, some staff and the consultant to review the responses, agree on a choice, then present their recommendation to the full council and, at that time, the general public. It also seems that most of this process was determined in executive secession, out of public view.

If this is indeed how it's going to be done, I think it's flawed in that there is a large lack of public and full council oversight. But, this is small compared with my primary objection which is the idea of leasing the docks in the first place. First, as I see it, Ketchikan is surviving on two main pillars, tourism and fishing. Logging has pretty much gone and mining has yet to get going. It needs to be remembered that S.E. Alaska voted for Statehood primarily to gain control of our fisheries. That control is no longer ours and now we are proposing to turn over control on our main tourism asset to the people we rent to. Does this make sense to anyone? Who do you think received copies of the RFP? I know that what's driving this is the large amount of money needed to make the big ships happy and a lack of faith that the public would vote to provide that money , even on a revenue bond issue, and that may well be so, but that does not make the lease idea a good one. The cruise industry already has way to much control over our well being. Why give them all of it. There is nothing, in my experience, that, once allowed life, will grow and survive better than a bad idea. Charlie Freeman