

Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
Independence Wharf, 470 Atlantic Avenue, Community Room, Boston, MA
Wednesday, September 15, 2010, 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Maureen Cavanaugh, Chair, welcomed all. Members and guests were introduced. The minutes of the June 2, 2010, meeting were reviewed and accepted.

Park Pet Policy

Bruce Jacobson, Superintendent, introduced a discussion of a pet policy for the park. He explained there is currently no guidance document that specifically addresses the issue of how pets can be accommodated in the park. While the park general management can be used to guide and inform the policy decision-making process, it does not address the specifics of pets.

Bruce reminded all that the park's purpose is two-fold: to provide quality visitor experiences that are tied to resources in the park; and to preserve and protect resources unimpaired for future generations.

Bruce asked council members to brainstorm issues to consider when creating a park pet policy. Members discussed issues briefly. A wide-range of opinions was presented and the list developed by the council is attached. There was general agreement among members that there should be a balance between protecting resources and accommodating dog owners. Rob McPherson of City Water Taxi said that boat trips for dog owners to Lovells and Thompson Islands in the spring of 2010 were extremely popular. He guessed that he brought more than 300 dogs to the islands. The following individuals volunteered to participate in the policy development process and will be invited to the next Operations Committee meeting: Nancy Callanan, Rob McPherson, Karen O'Donnell, Matt Wolfe, Maureen Cavanaugh, and Jennifer Bender Ferre.

Community Outreach

Charlie Norris gave an update on a pilot project for community outreach tailored for The Boston Harbor Association (TBHA) board. Bruce Jacobson, Louise Mallette, O'Donnell, and Charlie Norris will develop a presentation to raise the visibility of the islands; discuss policies and plans; and ask the group to provide feedback to the park. It is hoped that this work will be a template of sorts, to assist other members while reaching out to other organizations' boards of directors.

2016 Celebration Brainstorming

Bruce Jacobson opened a brainstorming session about the possibility of the park hosting a celebration in 2016. The year 2016 is significant because it marks the 20th anniversary of Boston Harbor Islands national park; the centennial of the National Park Service, and the tercentennial of Boston Light. He distributed two handouts with some information about the 300-year history of Boston Harbor navigational beacons and 55 years of use of the arbor Islands as parkland. He asked council members to give input about themes and/or events for the celebration. The resulting list is attached.

Ask the Superintendent

The group asked Bruce Jacobson several questions; responses are below.

- The newly repaired waterline to Georges Island was damaged again. Repairs are scheduled.
- Boston Harbor Island Alliance went out to bid for Peddocks Island improvements. The \$9M allocated for the project is not enough to do everything desired. The Boston Harbor Island Alliance board meets tomorrow to make their recommendation of what work should be done.

- The NPS tall ship replica *Friendship of Salem* will visit Boston on September 24 & 25. The ship will be docked at Courthouse Pier on Friday and NPS staff will work with school groups until early afternoon. The Boston Harbor Islands Regatta captains will have a reception on board later that evening. The *Friendship* will sail during the regatta and dock will be open to the public at Georges on Saturday.
- Gallops Island continues to be closed to the public because of asbestos in the soil. Early studies done by DCR shows that clean up may be less than originally thought (perhaps \$4M instead of \$8M). Final studies should be complete sometime this year. Money for the remediation has not been identified. Military funding possibilities were exhaustively explored; no funding is expected from that source.
- Scientific studies continue. A bat inventory was completed for three islands and three species were found. Bedrock geology and salt marsh health studies are also active at this time. Citizen science studies include water bird monitoring, marine invasive monitoring, phenology monitoring and early pest detection are running and staffed by volunteers. This year the park is part of a nation-wide bee monitoring study as part of an initiative to study climate change. It turns out that the islands are a great place to study bees; so far we have identified 154 species.
- Funding is still being sought for a new pier on Georges Island, an \$18M project. Grant applications were submitted to TIGER and TRIPP; we are still waiting to hear about the TIGER grant, the TRIPP request was not funded.
- Construction is 50% complete on the Boston Harbor Islands Pavilion.

New Business

Greg Ketchen announced that he will step down from the Advisory Council and the Partnership in March. He is moving to Cape Cod.

Details for the next meeting were discussed. It was noted that there were meetings in a row that started at 4:00 PM and it was difficult for some members to attend that early. Members requested the next meeting be held at the same location and that it be held from 5:00 – 7:00 PM.

Public Comment

There was no additional public comment.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.