

**Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**WilmerHale, 60 State Street, 26<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston, MA**  
**Wednesday, March 5, 2014, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM**  
*As amended*

Rob Moir, Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed all. The minutes of the December 4, 2013, meeting were approved. Council members and audience members introduced themselves.

Rob announced that Hugh Hawthorne, NPS Education Director, has taken a position as Superintendent of Gila Cliff Dwellings and will be leaving the park in April.

### **Youth Engagement**

Bob Page and Margie Brown, NPS, described two youth programs that the park is involved in, Branching Out, where high school students work with arborists, and the Designing the Parks program, hosted by the NPS Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, as a connection for high school and college students to get exposure into careers based in design and planning. This 6 week program challenged the students to envision the future of Peddocks Island. The students reached out to landscape architects and other park professionals for help developing a plan that respected the island's historical context and natural resources while considering conservation, appropriate land use, and the visitor experience. Margie shared the video that the students made showcasing their work.

Advisory Council members asked about the application and selection process and how the focus of the project was chosen. Elizabeth Solomon asked if traditional Native American use of the islands was considered, and if future curriculum could include focus on Native American landscapes.

### **Visitor Survey Trends**

Hugh Hawthorne, NPS, gave an overview of NPS visitor survey trends over time. Boston Harbor Islands has always received extremely good ratings, and in general are higher than NPS average, and continue to rise.

### **Membership Updates**

Mary Raczko, NPS, gave a membership update. Out of the 28 seats, there were 12 vacancies, 4 members that have reached their term limits but are planning to stay on the council until replaced, 2 members that reached the end of their current term and are recommended for new appointments, and 3 new candidates. The new candidates are John Emler, Town of Hingham, Heather Deschenes, New England Aquarium, and Kristen Wyman, Natick Nipmuc Tribal Council.

Mary said that elections for officer are usually held at the March annual meeting. She said that a Nominating Committee had not been formed in December, and that there also was not a quorum present. She reported that the Council has not had a quorum (currently 15 members constitutes a quorum) in several years. The Council discussed the issue and formed a Nominating/Bylaws to identify and recommend candidates to serve as officers for the coming year and also to review the Council's bylaws. The current bylaws have been in place since the council was formed, and it was thought that review was warranted. It is also the hope that some procedural issues could be solved with some small changes (such as the way a quorum is determined). Rob Moir, Maureen Cavanaugh, Elisabeth Solomon, Shane O'Donohue, Carl Johnson, and Kelly Hurstak volunteered to serve on the committee. The hope is to hold the elections of officers at the June meeting.

### **Park Updates**

Sally Snowman, USCG, said that the U.S. Coast Guard has secured \$1.1M from the Lighthouse Preservation Fund to prepare for the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Boston Light in 2016. A variety of infrastructure improvements are planned for the tower, keeper's house, outbuildings, and other systems. The work is scheduled to begin in April 2014 and conclude by the end of September 2014. Sally announced that Little Brewster Island will not be open for Boston Light tours this season because of the complex construction schedule, but they plan to resume in 2015—and will be well prepared for the celebration in 2016.

She reminded all of the other anniversaries that also happen in 2016. It is the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the National Park Service and the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Boston Harbor Islands National Recreation Area and that a committee is hard at work planning for that as well. Maureen Cavanaugh asked how the Council can support the effort. Sally said that the committee is looking at narrowing down the ideas into action items, so may know more how to engage the Council as the process moves forward.

Phil Griffiths gave an update on work on the Peddocks Island Chapel. He said Boston Harbor Island Alliance and DCR have invested over \$1M in funds to support the renovation. A local Carpenters Union is donating an enormous amount of time to the project. It is expected that much of the work will be complete by the end of May.

Phil Griffiths said that he was pleased to announce that Boston Harbor Cruises (BHC) will be the water transportation provider for the park through 2017. BHC will provide larger boats to expand capacity.

Managers are still working out details of the schedule. There will be no Quincy runs, but managers are working on providing departures from Hingham on some commuter boats. Phil reminded all that there will not be a significant subsidy provided this year, so it remains a challenge to maintain adequate service to the camping islands.

Hugh Hawthorne, NPS, said that the federal sequester was lifted, so a few more rangers could be hired this season. He said there are plans to expand park programming to land-based islands Webb Memorial and Worlds End and off-island locations like the Arnold Arboretum. He said that DCR is expected to hire the same number of seasonals this year as last.

Sally Snowman said that Graves Light owners Dave and Lynn Waller are discovering exactly how challenging it is to get to The Graves and are looking for ways to get the public safely there. They are committed to taking care of the lighthouse and sharing its rich history.

### **New Business**

Meeting dates were set for the coming year. The Council will meet quarterly on the second Wednesday of the month at alternating times (either 4-6 pm or 6-8 pm).

### **Public Comment**

There was no additional public comment.

The meeting was adjourned.

