

Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
Massachusetts State House, Gardner Auditorium, Boston, MA
Wednesday, June 4, 2008, 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Peter Rosen, Co-Chair, welcomed all. The minutes of the March 5 meeting were reviewed and accepted.

Learning and Research Center

Arthur Pearson, President of Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center (TIOBEC), and Bruce Jacobson, Superintendent, did a joint presentation about a proposed research and learning center on Thompson Island. The concept of the center is similar to existing NPS research and learning centers, which are places that facilitate research efforts and provide educational opportunities. An exciting aspect will be that it is not just a place for traditional students to study; it will be a center that will also provide opportunities for individuals, scientists, and park managers to learn about park resources.

The center was first proposed as a centennial challenge project along with 4 other park projects: island microwilderness; eco-friendly camp on Peddocks; Cultural Encounters (a Native American project), and restoring Fort Warren. The learning and research center was not funded through this fund. Arthur and Bruce also described an emerging partnership between TIOBEC and NPS to jointly deliver curriculum-based educational programming in the park. The move to more academically focused programs delivered by Thompson Island was recently unanimously endorsed by the TIOBEC Board of Directors. This effort supports the TIOBEC core mission and was deemed economically feasible and a way to expand their educational offerings in a meaningful way. Both agencies are actively seeking funding and creating partnerships with other organizations to support the educational programming and the creation of a Boston Harbor Islands research learning center.

Tom Powers, President of Boston Harbor Island Alliance (BHIA), joined the conversation about the transition of the park-wide formal educational programs from a partnership between NPS and BHIA to NPS and TIOBEC. There was agreement among all three organizations, that formal educational programming was a better fit with the resources and core mission of TIOBEC, then for BHIA. The partnership of NPS and TIOBEC on curriculum programs formally began this year, with the transition being financially assisted by BHIA. Education staff that had been working for BHIA has secured employment with TIOBEC, and will continue to do park-wide educational programs in conjunction with NPS. BHIA will continue to focus on their mission to promote access and awareness of the Boston Harbor Islands.

Organizational Matters

A small group from the Advisory Council (Peter Rosen, Chair, Karen O'Donnell, Vice-chair, Maureen Cavanaugh, and Maria Freddura) met with park staff (Bruce Jacobson, Superintendent, and Mary Raczko, Partnership Liaison) on May 1 to discuss ways to reinvigorate the Advisory Council.

An idea was discussed to create a steering committee of the Advisory Council. The purpose of the steering committee would be to alert other members of ongoing of the partnership and to identify things on which the council as a whole could become active. It was suggested that the steering committee be made up of council officers and members that regularly attend committee meetings and partnership meetings.

The group also discussed member participation levels. It was noted that many members and ex-officios do not attend meetings. There was a suggestion to contact all members to gauge their interest in continuing on the council. Peter Rosen offered to draft the letter.

Members discussed hosting a park orientation boat trip. A date was picked of June 25.

Mary Raczko announced NPS will purchase ferry tickets for Advisory Council members when they conduct business related to park. She explained the new voucher system; there are no longer passes available. Members will receive two tickets initially, if more are needed contact her.

A sign up sheet was passed around for members to sign up to attend committee meetings and receive notices; those not present will be contacted by email. Members on the council serve in a voluntary capacity. They were asked to sign up as Volunteers in Parks (VIP) and to keep track of and report their hours on an annual basis.

An idea to take pictures of all members and post on the web was discussed briefly. There was no consensus.

National Park Service Report

Bruce reported Mayor Thomas Menino joined representatives from the National Park Service, Boston Harbor Island Alliance and Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology (MCZ) for a press event on May 22 to announce the receipt of NPS Centennial Funds to support the all-taxa biodiversity inventory. *PredatOR Prey*, a new educational card game conceived and taught by teens, the Island Ambassadors was highlighted. Decks of cards and *PredatOR Prey* posters were given to council members.

Bruce announced Denise Sarno-Bucca was recently promoted to a new position within DCR as Forest and Park Regional Coordinator for Boston Harbor Islands. He also announced Marc Albert was selected for a new NPS position, Stewardship Services Program Manager.

Bruce mentioned the Boston Harbor Islands color guard presented the colors at the opening of the Boston Red Sox game on April 22, in honor of Earth Day and National Park Week.

Bruce announced two clean-up efforts. Park staff participated in a successful clean-up of Snake Island hosted by a volunteer group in Winthrop on April 4. A large clean-up effort is scheduled on Peddocks Island on June 7. NPS and DCR are supporting the efforts of Rob DeCoste, a graduate student that spearheaded the effort. His recruitment video can be seen at YouTube.com.

Volunteer shorebird monitoring has begun for 2008. A team of eight volunteers will work with ornithologists to record details of significant nesting sites within the park. They will survey islands from mid-May through mid-July.

Bruce reported that Harbor Islands Express is operating the park's new ticket kiosk on Long Wharf. It is a significant improvement over the old temporary kiosk that staff had been using.

Bruce also announced that over the winter several geocaching sites were discovered within the park. Geocaching is a high-tech treasure hunting game that is not permitted in National Parks, because of the disturbance to resources. Managers are working to remove the containers and a new program *IslandCache*, was created. *IslandCache* is completely virtual; participants hunt for significant locations within the park, not physical containers.

Public Comment

Suzanne Gall Marsh, Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, announced the Friends are applying for funding to support the rehabilitation of a cottage on Peddocks Island to be used as a visitor center. She also invited all to bid on the Friends online auction.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council
6/4/08 Meeting Attendance

VOTING MEMBERS and interest group

1. Jennifer Bender, ENV	
2. Kurt Bornheim*, MUN	
3. Victor Brogna*, COM	X
4. Maureen Cavanaugh, B&C	X
5. Mary Corcoran, EDU	
6. Theresa Czerepica, COM	X
7. Peter Davidoff, B&C	
8. Sean Glennon, MUN	
9. Bill Hale, ADV	X
10. David Kales*, ADV	
11. Seth Kaplan, ENV	
12. Greg Ketchen, B&C	
13. Steve Kirk*, B&C	
14. Dottie Merrill, EDU	X
15. Chris Montgomery, NA	X
16. Charlie Norris, ADV	X
17. Pat Morss*, EDU	
18. Karen O'Donnell, ENV	X
19. Linda Poolaw, NA	
20. Bill Reardon, MUN	
21. Peter Rosen, Co-Chair, EDU	X
22. Claudia Smith-Reid, Co-Chair, COM	
23. Bettina Washington*, NA	
24. Lauri Webster, ENV	
25. Matt Wolfe, ADV	
26. Vacant Seat, COM	
27. Vacant Seat, MUN	
28. Vacant Seat, NA	

*appointments pending

Interest Groups

- ADV – Boston Harbor Related Advocacy
- B&C – Business & Commercial
- COM – Community Groups
- EDU – Education and Cultural
- ENV – Environmental Organizations
- MUN – Municipalities
- NA – Native American

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Ex officio (Education)

Russ Bowles	
Carl Johnson	
David Weinstein	
Jack Wiggin	

Ex officio (Business & Commercial)

Maria Freddura	
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Ex officio (Advocacy)

Vivien Li	
Suzanne Gall Marsh	X

Ex officio (Municipalities)

Daniel Ryan Congressman	
Michael Capuano Congressman	
Kathy Melia Congressman	
William Delahunt	

Ex officio (Native American)

Edith Andrews	
Mary Anne Hendricks	X
Gil Solomon	

OTHERS

Marc Albert, NPS	
Sheila Colwell, NPS	
Bruce Jacobson, NPS	X
Kelly Fellner, NPS	
Alex Hall, DCR	
Diane Haynes, BHIA	
Susan Kane, DCR	
Steve Marcus, FBHI	X
Arthur Pearson, TIOBEC	X
Tom Powers, BHIA	X
Mary Raczko, NPS	X
Chuck Smythe, NPS	
Carol Thistle, BHIA	

MCIA – MA Commission on Indian Affairs

DCR – Department of Conservation and Recreation

FBHI – Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands

BHIA – Island Alliance

NPS – National Park Service

TIOBEC – Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center