

Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council
Meeting Minutes
New England Aquarium, 15 State Street, 8th Floor Conference Room, Boston, MA
Wednesday, December 10, 2014, 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Elizabeth Solomon, Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed all. The minutes of the September 29, 2014, meeting were approved. Council and audience members introduced themselves.

Pedlocks Island Ethnography Research Project

Cathy Stanton gave a presentation about an ethnographic study of the cottage community on Pedlocks Island. The study investigated the origins of the cottages on Pedlocks Island, and explored if the area can be classified as a “community” within the Boston Harbor Islands.

Park Updates

Giles Parker said that park marketing initiatives have grown, and that it contributes to National Park Service Centennial goals. He said that he considers the Advisory Council to have an important role expanding the park’s ability to better engage communities. Bill Reardon said small boaters are an important community that is currently underserved, and suggested more outreach to them. Suzanne Gall Marsh added there is a maritime center in Hough’s Neck that has space to hold 60 people, with parking and bus service that would be an excellent exhibit area and also has nearby docks and a launch for small craft. She said that Margaret LaForest from Discover Quincy is eager to find ways to connect the park, and would make a good candidate for Council membership.

Giles said that ferry service was up 17% over last season and 35% over 2012 season. He mentioned the need for a more comprehensive park-wide counting system, and for carrying capacity studies.

Giles reported that Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) held a public meeting on December 9, to gather input for the development of a resource management plan for the DCR properties associated with Boston Harbor Islands. He said they have been working with NPS, and that there is still time to comment and share ideas.

Pat Morss asked if there were any updates on plans for the upcoming anniversaries (300th for Boston Light, 100th for NPS, and 20th for the park). Giles said the United States Coast Guard has a group working on the celebration for Boston Light, and the NPS is gearing up for the centennial nationwide, and that we should hear about more about plans soon.

Giles said that the closure of Long Island Bridge, remains a hardship for those displaced and affected. The situation has also led to more opportunities to create dialogue with the City of Boston and Camp Harborview. Park managers were included in discussions exploring options of how to provide public access for the camp without taking away from harbor water transportation needs of other programs. The challenges are many, and include that there are a limited number of boats available in the harbor that have capacity to accommodate the desired schedule. The expense of course is a concern, and the current dock is not adequate to serve very large boats at all tide levels. DCR is assisting the City of Boston by transporting personnel and equipment on and off the island. The agencies have also been working together on efforts to retain utility service to Spectacle after the bridge is demolished.

Bylaws Update

Draft bylaws were reviewed and approved at the meeting September meeting of the Council. Since that time they were also reviewed by the National Park Service Policy Office. The solicitor suggested that two changes be made to the draft. That a consequence be retained for members that fail to participate, along with another technical change about travel regulations. The incorrect travel information was removed from Article VI (2) and the following text was added to Article IV (5): "When any member fails to attend three consecutive meetings, the Chair, in consultation with the relevant interest group and the DFO, may deem that member's position on the Council to have been vacated. Upon such determination, the DFO will inform the member, in writing, that the Council will seek another representative to fill the vacancy. A motion was made to approve the bylaws incorporating these changes. **The motion was unanimously passed.**

Council Business

Elizabeth Solomon said the Advisory Council to needs to develop strategies how to best achieve its purpose to advise the Partnership on management issues. She said Partnership focus and operations have changed since the park's creation and they need to find effective ways to participate in current times. For instance, Council members did participate in meetings of the Operations Committee of the Partnership, but that is currently the only active committee. Members also participate in planning sessions like the State of the Park" but those are infrequent. She suggested that a survey be developed to help gather ideas to inform next steps of the effort to develop mission and goals. Jen Bender, Kelly Hurstak, and Elizabeth volunteered to serve on a survey team.

Suzanne Gall Marsh requested that the Advisory Council membership list that is available online should show the organizations that members represent.

The annual meeting is scheduled for March 11, and a nominating committee needs to be formed to elect officers and nominate a Partnership representative for one of the Advisory Council seats. Pat Morss and Maureen Cavanaugh volunteered to serve on the nominating committee. There are still many vacancies on the council to fill. Ten of the twenty-eight seats are considered vacant, two "pending members" are awaiting official appointment, and eleven members' terms are expired, or will expire in 2015. Although members serve until their successors are appointed, only seven of these members with expired terms are eligible for re-nomination per the bylaws requirement of stepping down a year between terms, and some have declined to submit their names for re-nomination, and only offered to serve until replaced.

Public Comment

Suzanne Gall Marsh announced an upcoming New Years Day cruise to Thompson Island hosted by Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands. She also said Karen O'Donnell's obituary was in the Boston Globe. Karen was a long time member of the Advisory Council and will be missed.

The meeting was adjourned.

12-10-14 Meeting Attendees

MEMBERS PRESENT (X)

1. Neal Caten	
2. Maureen Cavanaugh	X
3. Heather Dechenes	X
4. Jane Ellis*	X
5. John Emler	
6. Lou Gainor	
7. Walter Hope	
8. Kelly Hurstak, Vice Chair	X
9. Carl Johnson	X
10. Dale Linder	
11. Jim Martel	X
12. Rob Moir	
13. Charlie Norris	X
14. Jim Peters	
15. Peter Rosen	
16. Elizabeth Solomon, Chair	X
17. Lauri Webster	X
18. Susan Woods*	X
19. Vacant Seat, Environmental	
20. Vacant Seat, Educational & Cultural	
21. Vacant Seat, Community	
22. Vacant Seat, Community	
23. Vacant Seat, Community	
24. Vacant Seat, Community	
25. Vacant Seat, Municipalities	
26. Vacant Seat, Municipalities	
27. Vacant Seat, Native American	
28. Vacant Seat, Native American	

*pending member

QUORUM PRESENT, 8 OF 16 OFFICIAL MEMBERS

OTHERS PRESENT

[illegible]

BHIA – Boston Harbor Island Alliance
DCR – Department of Conservation and Recreation
NPS – National Park Service
TIOBEC-Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center

****Emeritus Council Member**