

**Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council Meeting**  
**Wednesday, March 9, 2016**  
**6:00 – 8:00 PM**  
**African Meeting House, 46 Joy Street**

**Call to Order, Introductions and Remarks**

Elizabeth Solomon, Chair, welcomed all and introduced Michael Creasey, General Superintendent of National Parks of Boston.

Michael Creasey spoke briefly about the parks that make up National Parks of Boston and the amazing resources they collectively have. He mentioned the particular significance that the African Meeting House holds to him. Michael also spoke to the merits of partnership and advisory structures, and thanked the council for their efforts and contributions to the park. He introduced Marita Rivero, Executive Director of the Museum of African American History (MAAH). Marita Rivera welcomed everyone to MAAH, and she spoke about the value of the African Meeting House and discussed its history in the community.

Elizabeth Solomon, Chair, introduced the idea of the Boston Harbor Islands as areas of separation, introduced the format of the presentation and thanked all the speakers for coming.

**Boston Harbor Islands as Areas of Separation**

Joe Bagley, City of Boston Archeologist said the harbor islands have a long and complex history beginning with use by American Indians. The focus of his presentation was after the 1600's and was about access. He showed maps that helped show how Boston Harbor became a hub of culture and transportation for the whole of Eastern Massachusetts and how the islands became the place that where the unwanted were sent, for many things that no one wanted in their backyard. The physical location allowed not just this "exile" it also allowed people to separate themselves become an isolated community. Joe said that this "otherness" that is created and remains relatively unchanged over time, which is interesting for an archeology. He said that many of the islands are undeveloped and have not been redeveloped multiple times like most of downtown Boston and there continues to be much to learn.

Elizabeth Carella, photo historian and researcher, gave a presentation about Rainsford Island. Rainsford Island was often a place of exile rather than a place of refuge. The island was bought to be used as a hospital, opened in 1738. It was to be used as a quarantine station, house paupers, and the critically ill and homeless. It was also a reform station for "wayward boys". There were doctors treating quarantined patients with smallpox and other chronically ill patients. It also served as a civil war hospital. The hospital had shockingly bad conditions and there issues with vermin and bedbugs. It

also served as a reformatory for boys who had different degrees of bad behavior. The boys were sometimes deprived of food, locked in closets and handcuffed to their beds.

Daniel Bird, Director of Volunteer Services at Tufts New England Medical Center, gave a presentation Floating Hospital. In the late 1800s, the hospital began its mission as a ship that sailed Boston Harbor offering care and fresh air to Boston's children, and teaching mothers how to participate in their children's health care. Daniel explained that in 1894 there was a huge influx of European immigrants into Boston. People lived in very tight quarters and lots of people got sick – especially children. There was very poor medical care, but many people decided it was most helpful to bring sick children to the ocean for fresh air. The idea came from here to put these children on a barge with medical professionals. The barge was used at night for entertainment at night, and the city decided to transform it into a floating hospital for children in the daytime. By having groups of children and doctors together, they were able to begin doing research. Many new discoveries were made, including the invention of Similac to mimic mothers' milk. Doug said the Floating Hospital for Children still exists, solidly anchored in downtown Boston. It is no longer an operating boat but is still an innovator in improving the care of children and still retains the same philosophy of the importance of family in the healing process.

### **Council Business**

The minutes from the December 9, 2015 meeting were approved.

#### Nominations and elections of officers

The membership committee presented the slate of officers, Elizabeth Solomon was recommended to continue as Chair and Heather Deschenes was recommended as Vice Chair. There were no other candidates presented and no nominations from the floor.

The membership committee said that they recommended that the Chair and Vice Chair be put forth as nominees for the Partner seats re. Kelly was elected as the new voting alternate. We are still looking for a new voting alternate.

Joanne (UMass Archivist) is interested in joining the AC in an education slot. She will go to the membership committee to follow the steps to joining the committee.

She works with archival materials related to the Boston harbor islands in behalf of UMass Boston. She is trying to make connections and let people know that there is a place where people can preserve resources for the study of the Boston harbor islands. Mary will give them the information that she needs. There are also some other people from UMass Boston and we will only take one on the committee.

### **Park Updates**

Giles Parker, Superintendent, gives updates on the park.

It is a season of anniversaries for the NPS and the Boston Harbor Islands as a whole. Nationwide it is the centennial of the National Park Service. There is a huge ongoing

marketing effort on a nation-wide level, including the IMAX film, National Geographic special edition. Locally, we are coming together with partners to focus on:

Getting kids and families to the islands

Boston Harbor Islands Discovery Camps

Free Ferry Day to start the year and on founders day.

Community engagement opportunities

Building volunteerism

UMass Boston research opportunities

300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Boston light – special event in September.

On island improvements – Peddocks, Georges and Little Brewster

Focus on partnership

National Parks of Boston

BHIA and TBHA

Charlie and Giles discuss the logistics of the merger between TBHA and BHIA – the staff will practically continue to operate as usual while the board is reconstituted, but they will be officially “merged” starting before this summer season. They are excited about the possibility of the efforts of this new organization going above and beyond, viewing the city, harbor and islands in a more unified way.

MC - TBHA will be assumed into BHIA so that there will be no legal ramifications regarding the legislated partnership the BHIA.

Elizabeth asked addressed concerns about the changing role of the advocacy role of TBHA. Charlie said that the advocacy piece will be done by committees within the organization, but it will have to be a learning process as issues arise. Charlie said that he was comfortable that it will worked out. There will be a new name, announced soon, for the new organization. There is interest in discussing this further, members are encouraged to contact Elizabeth who will put something together to talk about it. One thing to think about is the DCR RMP, and ways that we can best provide feedback for that.

Giles called people’s attention to the Urban Agenda – what are relevant stories that we need to be telling. What are our engaging stories that people care about? Members are invited to bring these ideas up to Giles later on.

### **New Business**

No new business.

### **Public Comment**

Suzanne mentions that tomorrow will be the 18th anniversary of the first advisory council meeting. She expressed concern about elections. She asked who is on the Membership Committee. Elizabeth said that Kelly is the chair of the membership committee. Suzanne said it should be a priority for the next meeting to address membership. Mary made it clear that people are welcome to express interest in joining or nominating anyone let them know.

### **Next Meetings**

### **Adjourn**

Elizabeth adjourned the meeting.

Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council  
12/9/15 Meeting Attendees

**MEMBERS PRESENT (X)**

1. Greg Abel*	X
2. Neal Caten	
3. Maureen Cavanaugh	X
4. Heather Dechenes	X
5. Jane Ellis*	
6. John Emler	
7. Lou Gainor	X
8. Walter Hope	
9. Kelly Hurstak, Vice Chair	X
10. Carl Johnson	
11. Dale Linder	
12. Jim Martel	
13. Rob Moir	
14. Charlie Norris	X
15. Jim Peters	
16. Peter Rosen	
17. Elizabeth Solomon, Chair	X
18. Lauri Webster	
19. Susan Woods*	
20. Vacant Seat, Environmental	
21. Vacant Seat, Educational & Cultural	
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 Not PRESENT**  
**only 6 OF 16 OFFICIAL MEMBERS**

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Marc Albert, NPS	X
Jennifer Bender	
Kristina Bergquist	X
Elisabeth Colby, NPS	X
Theresa Czerepica**	
Michael Endicott	
Jude Griffin	
Phil Griffiths, BHIA	X
Bill Hale**	
Elizabeth James-Perry	
Susan Kane, DCR	X
Liz Kay	
Steve Marcus, FBHI	
Elizabeth Medeiros	
Suzanne Gall Marsh** FBHI	X
Pat Morss**	
Giles Parker, NPS	X
Jonathan Perry	
James Poplasky	
Mary Raczko, NPS	X
Bill Reardon**	X
Sally Snowman, USCG	
Kristen Wyman	

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