

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership  
Twenty-seventh Meeting Minutes  
Hale & Dorr, 60 State Street, Boston, MA, 26<sup>th</sup> Floor  
November 18, 1999, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

PRESENT: Rob Moir, Edith Andrews, Advisory Council; Commander Sue Bibeau, US Coast Guard (USCG); Maynard Goldman, Island Alliance (IA); Cathy Douglas Stone, City of Boston; Peter Webber, Department of Environmental Management (DEM); Brian Broderick, Metropolitan District Commission (MDC); George Price, National Park Service (NPS); Richard Howe, The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR); Alden Gifford, Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center (TIOBEC)

Cathy Douglas Stone, Vice-Chair, called the twenty-seventh meeting of the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership to order and declared a quorum.

**Review of minutes from the October 21, 1999, meeting**

Edith Andrews requested that the September minutes be amended in the section regarding the Native American meeting. The draft general management plan was not discussed at that meeting, it was only mentioned.

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the October 21 meeting, and to revise the September 16 meeting as requested. **The motion was carried.**

**Website**

Bruce Jacobson reported on the status of the Boston Harbor Islands web resources. He projected the web sites live as he discussed them (see attached for some of the information reviewed). Users now may choose the Official Park Reference Guide or the Official Islands Visitor Guide when entering the sites. Then users may link to the Islands Learning Center which includes data generated by the Island Alliance islands curriculum project. The benefits of adding a listing of all Partnership and Advisory Council meetings was discussed. It was thought that this option would be beneficial for the Partners and the public.

It was suggested that the Partners add links to the Boston Harbor Islands site on all their web pages. There is a simple way to add, contact Bruce for information. Edith Andrews asked that the timeline be corrected on a game that was previewed. The timeline started with the year 1600, and Native Americans inhabited the islands much earlier than that. Bruce will make the correction.

**Summer Review**

Thom Dugan, MDC, gave a report that reviewed the visitor season. He said that the MDC had a successful year and an excellent crew. They participated in many successful collaborative programs. He passed out an outline of visitation statistics. Overall, visitation numbers were only slightly higher than last year. The number of participants in programs rose dramatically, even though the actual number of programs was reduced. Hingham continues to grow as gateway.

Halloween on the Harbor was expanded to three weekends. Events this year were better publicized in general. He said that there was some confusion with the camping system changes early on, but the permitting issues were worked out through the season due to the close relationship with DEM staff.

Suzanne Gall Marsh, Advisory Council, inquired if the visitation numbers reflected both ferries and private boaters. Thom explained that a count is taken when visitors step on the island. They also compare numbers with the boat company. There was a discussion about a visitor statistic counting method that could be used park-wide. The Operations Committee intends to discuss methods and design one that would be accepted and used by all the island managers. Suzanne stated her concern that the numbers are critical for planning and wanted to know if there was a way to get numbers in the short-term.

Brad Sands, DEM, said that the DEM had a successful season. He said he worked with a particularly good and motivated crew. The programs this year went smoothly and there are plans to develop additional programs relating to human impact on the environment, and marine science. Programs will be planned around new ferry routes next season. The idea of expanding Kiddleiscope to Gallop's island was mentioned. The camping reservation system was changed to a statewide reservation line this year. The islands are the only park in the DEM system not charging a fee for camping. The new system seems to be working, and exposes the park to a larger number of people. He presented a list of visitation statistics. Brad said that two new full time positions were added this year. Suzanne requested seasonal staffing information in writing from all the agencies.

Brad thanked Bruce Jacobson and Thom Dugan for their efforts in the joint training at the beginning of the season. He felt that the training was an important experience for the seasonal staff. Thom Dugan mentioned that DEM was instrumental in the process. There is a group already working on joint training plans for the 2000 season to improve the program.

The size of the water taxis are really a limiting factor, only 45 people can come at a time. Brad thanked the Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands for all their help throughout the season.

Alden Gifford reported on the summer season for Thompson Island. He said that an estimated 20,000 people have visited the Thompson Island from May through October. Many were youth on scholarships. They offered many courses such as a professional development day course, held in collaboration with the New England Aquarium, and a 5-day course to prevent violence for youth at risk, that was made possible by a grant from the Boston Police. There were also special events and guided visits.

Claudia Smith Reid, Advisory Council said that the Harbor Visions Crew did a visitor survey this season. They are working on tabulating the results.

Brad Swing, City of Boston, reported that this year the City, working in collaboration with the New England Aquarium, opened a summer camp on Long Island. Three hundred and forty

campers were involved in one-week sessions over 4 weeks. The program was underwritten by Massachusetts Environmental Trust. The program is expected to continue next year. Cathy Douglas Stone asked Brad to prepare a written report for the Operations Committee.

### **Spectacle Island Update**

Diane Haynes, DEM, gave an update on the Spectacle Island construction. The first phase is 90% complete. The artery fill is out there, the landfill is capped, the plantings are done, the trails are constructed, and utility lines are in place. This phase could be completed as early as the end of December, but it might continue in spring.

The second phase, which includes state-funded elements, is now in design phase. They are trying to incorporate "green" ideals, as this is an example of recycling of natural resource. Design plans are 50% complete for the visitor center and include photovoltaics on the roof due to grant money received from Boston Edison. They are looking at a new design for sanitary system. Designs for the pier should be complete by spring. The contract award should happen next summer, with construction beginning Spring 2001.

Spectacle Island is jointly owned by the City of Boston and DEM. The Visitor Center and pier are both state locations. It has made construction a challenging process. They continue to work with the Spectacle Island Advisory Committee and are also working with the New England Aquarium, UMASS Boston and Modern Continental.

### **Operations Committee**

George Price said that the Operations Committee has been discussing how Sail 2000 affects the Partnership. A representative from the U.S. Coast Guard gave a specific update to the committee on the plans for the harbor that will be incorporated for Sail 2000. The island managers discussed their plans and concerns for the islands. The main focus is to protect the resources, but this is also seen as an opportunity to get involved. There is a possibility to involve Spectacle Island, as it is a prime viewing area. There is a group looking into the different possibilities for access, a program that is not in any Partner's budget.

### **Nominating/Bylaws Committee**

Rob Moir said that the draft bylaws for the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership were distributed last month for review. There was a motion made to adopt the bylaws. **The motion was carried.**

### **Planning Committee**

Linda Haar reported that NPS staff would meet with a policy committee in Washington, DC, in two weeks for a preliminary review of the draft General Management Plan. It is expected that the draft will be ready for public review in January or February.

The work on the companion piece, the summary brochure continues. The Planning Committee began discussions regarding integrated transportation between land and water. It is a short and long-term goal to tie the water transportation to the land system. Bruce Jacobson, NPS, has met with all of the committees and collected comments about their goals for the draft strategic plan. The committee is working to turn them into initiatives. The draft strategic plan is scheduled to be available in February. She asked for feedback now on goals so they can be incorporated. The Planning Committee felt a 5-year plan was desired, not simply just to fulfill a requirement, but

would be an important tool for plan implementation. The committee felt that it was crucial to understand priorities and fit them with funding priorities.

### **Finance Committee**

Cathy Douglas Stone said that the funding assumptions were distributed for review at the last Partnership meeting. She said that the committee will be asking for approval at a later date, and requested that all comments please go to George Price. He will bring them to the Finance Committee for review.

George Price reported that the NPS would be submitting hazardous material funding requests to the NPS for DEM, MDC, and Thompson Island. They are also applying for a federal public land core grant, for three projects, one in collaboration with Thompson Island, one with the Harbor Visions Crew and one with Boston African American NHS. George is also working with Island Alliance to get foundation money for these youth projects.

### **Advisory council report**

Jack Wiggin, Advisory Council, said that the council has not met in full since the last Partnership meeting. There was a study session held on November 10, where they discussed hosting community meetings. There is a sub-committee in place to work on them. The council also plans to have the interest groups convene their constituency to get the word of the plan out. The council has received \$15,000 from the Merck Family Fund with the Island Alliance serving as fiscal agent. The committee has been working on how to allocate the funds; it is thought that the majority of the money will go to staffing the effort of public outreach regarding the plan. The council will continue to search for other funding sources. The next full meeting is December 9. There are seven council seats due to expire in March. The nominating process will begin at the next meeting. Suzanne Gall Marsh said that the discussion of plans for a report card on park operations would continue.

### **Public comment**

Dick Silverman acknowledged Nancy Martin's considerable contribution to the Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands. He informed the Partnership that Nancy would be leaving her position to take on other opportunities. She will fortunately be continuing her volunteer activity.

Nancy Martin said that she has been working on a survey of the volunteers from last summer. She is now collating the information. This year, they were also asked to describe what they did this year and what they wanted to do in the future. This information should help the new volunteer coordinator.

Dick Silverman said that there was a board meeting later that evening. It is expected that they will be naming a new Volunteer Coordinator soon. Edith Andrews thanked Nancy for all her work. The Partnership invited Nancy to come back for a formal farewell.

Suzanne Gall Marsh, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, said that she had just come back from a trip to Maui. She had an opportunity to meet and talk with Haleakala park staff about

their GMP, strategic plan, and the concept of revenue generation. She said it was very interesting and she would like to share the information with the Finance Committee.

**New business**

Commander Sue Bibeau said that the U.S. Coast Guard wanted to formally recognize two members of the National Park Service for their contributions to Little Brewster visitor pilot project. She presented public service awards, certificate awards and hats to Richard Armenia and Kelly Fellner.

Edith Andrews said that Jack Campisi, ethnographer, has been contracted by the NPS to do a Native American ethnographic review and assessment. She has high regard for his previous work, and looked forward to working with him on this project.

George Price said that Greg Ketchen, Advisory Council, has been working with the continuing problem of floating debris in the harbor. He announced that there is a workshop on the subject scheduled for tomorrow at 10:00 AM at the New England Aquarium.

The Partnership wanted to send a letter to Jill Ochs Zick thanking her for her efforts, specifically with Spectacle Island.

Thoughts and prayers go out to Justine Liff.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 PM.