

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership  
Meeting Minutes  
Hale & Dorr, 60 State Street, 26<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston, MA  
September 25, 2001, 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM**

PRESENT: Edith Andrews, Claudia Smith Reid, Advisory Council; Kathy Abbott, Island Alliance; Linda Haar, Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Terry Savage, National Park Service (NPS); Cathy Douglas Stone, Office of Environmental Services City of Boston; Bob Durand, Secretary of Environmental Affairs representing the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA); Peter Lewenberg, Department of Environmental Management; Samantha Overton Bussell for David Balfour, Metropolitan District Commission (MDC); Alden Gifford, Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center (TIOBEC).

Cathy Douglas Stone, Vice-chair, called the meeting to order and declared a quorum. She recognized the passing of Edith and Joe Andrews' son José. Condolences were shared.

**Approval of minutes from July 17, 2001**

There was a motion made to accept the minutes of July 17, 2001.

**The motion was approved.**

**Planning Committee**

Linda Haar reported that the last Planning Committee meeting was cut short as it was held on September 11. The committee started a discussion about the construction support building on Deer Island that is scheduled for removal and if it was appropriate for the committee to look into any potential reuses of it for the park. A working group was established to continue that conversation.

**Operations Committee**

George Price, NPS, said that the committee discussed the 2001 summer season at the last meeting. Visitation numbers were received from Boston Harbor Cruises through July. Visitation was up this year with a significant increase in the July numbers. It was thought that the good weather on the weekends was a factor in the increase. George also mentioned two new events this year that were very successful: the Landmarks Symphony Orchestra on Georges Island and the Harbor Islands Triathlon in Hull. He thanked the Town of Hull and especially the Hull Harbor Master, Kurt Bornheim, for all their help.

Alex Hall, MDC, reported that they had a successful summer. Georges, Lovells and Peddocks islands were open daily in the summer, with camping available on Lovells and Peddocks. Georges will continue to be open daily and Peddocks, with camping, will be open on the weekends until Columbus Day. He reported that there had been a slowdown since the events of September 11, but they are still drawing a respectable crowd on the weekends. Halloween on the Harbor will be held on the last weekend in October; tickets are on sale through Boston Harbor Cruises.

Diane Haynes, DEM, also reported a successful summer for the agency. Grape and Bumpkin were open daily in the summer and offered camping. This year, under the direction of Commissioner Webber, they were able to open Great Brewster for the first time in ten years. Throughout the summer the Knotts Island was used to transport visitors because the pier was still under construction and the boat was equipped to land directly on the island. The pier was completed recently and now the Irene is able to dock there. Grape, Bumpkin and Great Brewster islands are open for day use on weekends until September 30.

Diane Haynes explained that the current contract for water transportation will expire in March 2002. The current contract could be extended for one year or a new contract process could be initiated. A transportation sub-committee of the Partnership has met to discuss the contract situation and plans to make a recommendation to the Partnership in the next month or two. Edith Andrews asked if they are trying to attract different vendors. Diane explained that they tried to reach a broad range of boat companies for the last contract. They sent out requests to more than 20 different vendors and posted the opportunity on the state contracting webpage but only received 3 responses. The sub-committee is currently seeking input from a variety of boat operators.

### **Marketing Committee**

Peter Lewenberg gave an update of the activities of the Marketing Committee. The committee is working on ways to increase public awareness of the park.

Branding images for promotion and retail are under development with the help of Bill Davis and his team from Holland Mark. Ken Wright, graphic designer has developed images for seven islands so far. The draft images will be presented to the Marketing Committee for review at the next meeting. Initial responses have been very enthusiastic and encouraging.

Peter gave a summary of public relations efforts. The park has received assistance from Island Alliance. Jeremy Crockford has been hired to help promote the park. Peter listed several media sources that promoted the park and presented several articles written throughout the summer.

Bruce Jacobson, NPS, introduced Ken Mallory, Editor in Chief for Publishing at the New England Aquarium, to discuss a new photo guidebook to the islands. Ken said that the New England Aquarium, National Park Service and Island Alliance are in the final stages of the project on behalf of the park. An early draft was submitted to Partner agencies and was improved by the comments received back. Recently, additions were made from the draft Cultural Landscape Report for the park that was reviewed by the Partner agencies last year. If anyone would like to comment further, please contact Bruce Jacobson for the text and respond before October 15.

Bruce also gave an update of the sign program. He said that the plan had been to piggyback with the MWRA sign program, but that progress had slowed with the change in leadership. MWRA is now moving forward. They made some adjustments that may actually offer more flexibility for the rest of the park. Bruce introduced some new design ideas for brochure/literature racks and island/gateway

identification signs for comment. He said that he and Peter Lewenberg will meet with each Partner agency to discuss the specific needs of each island.

The initial phase of the project will cost about \$150k and will provide island identification and orientation signs to the places that have regular ferry service. Secretary Durand has made a \$75k commitment already; Island Alliance is still pursuing other funding sources.

### **Island Alliance**

Kathy Abbott reported that the Island Alliance has been focusing on promotion and programs for the park. She mentioned that fundraising has become much more challenging since September 11. The annual dinner will be held on October 29.

Doug Welch reported on the revenue generating operations:

- The Little Brewster tours were very successful, the numbers had doubled from the previous year and the program showed a profit. The program continued despite the recent events without a break in service thanks to the efforts of the US Coast Guard.
- Retail efforts were expanded this year. During the summer there was a retail cart that operated on Long Wharf that did more business than the store. The retail program broke even this year, which is an improvement. The courthouse closed the section of the building that houses the store after September 11, so retail operations have ended for the season.
- The mooring program began in July. This year, even with the very late start and the fact that very little promotion was done, the moorings did do well on the weekends. They are optimistic for next season.

There was discussion about having a donation box for the park that would be administered by Island Alliance on Georges Island.

### **Advisory Council**

Suzanne Gall Marsh gave the report for the council. She said that the Advisory Council met on September 12. The council discussed many operational issues and requested a summer update from the agencies at the next meeting. The water transportation contract was the focus of the meeting. The council formed a sub-committee to focus on water transportation issues. The council also discussed the cottages on Peddocks Island.

### **Public Comment**

Nancy Martin asked if Gallops Island would be open next year. Peter Lewenberg said that DEM is working hard trying to address the environmental issues and is actively searching for funding. He said that there is extensive work that needs done and it is unlikely they will be able to reopen it next year.

Carol Fithian, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, said that she got several requests over the summer from companies, colleges and groups of volunteers that

wanted to do projects on the islands. She requested that the island owners provide her a list of projects that need done so that she could match them up. George Price said that although we don't want to turn them down, it would be very good public relations, volunteer help is often overwhelming to the island owners. These projects take a great deal of coordination, expense and supervision. The challenge is to continue to offer more opportunities in a controlled and managed way. The clean-ups and youth core programs over the last couple of years have been really successful.

Bruce Stonefish, Delaware Tribe (Canada), asked about the proposal the Muhheconneuk Intertribal Committee on Deer Island (MICDI) put forth. He expressed concern that Tribes had not been properly consulted.

Cathy Stone explained that at the July meeting, a unanimous vote was taken by the Partnership to approve the general management plan. The plan will now go under review by the Governor and the Secretary of Interior. She said that the plan had undergone extensive review by the agencies, tribes and public. The general management plan is not the end product, but the beginning. There will be continued opportunity for input from all parties.

Edith Andrews confirmed that there was consultation with Indian Tribes. There were several different Tribes represented at the meetings. She said that both federally and state recognized Tribes have been involved in the process.

There was a lengthy discussion about the consultation process and the MICDI.

George Price said that there was a successful structure to the consultation process in place that they plan to build on. He introduced Chuck Smythe, NPS Ethnographer. Chuck said that the park is committed to consultation as an on-going process. There are state and federal laws in existence that protects burial grounds. George stated that they look forward to working with the Tribes on new history and education projects and have some funds set aside to do so. They continue to be supportive of Native American efforts to have an appropriate memorial facility, a museum and hold a history conference.

Bruce Stonefish thanked the Partnership for their time and requested documentation of their efforts.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05