

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership
Meeting Minutes
Hale & Dorr, 60 State Street, 26th Floor, Boston, MA
December 18, 2001, 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM**

PRESENT: Edith Andrews, Joe Ferrino, Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Dan May, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG); Maynard Goldman, Island Alliance; Linda Haar, Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Peter Webber, Department of Environmental Management; Terry Savage, National Park Service (NPS); Samantha Overton Bussell, Metropolitan District Commission (MDC); Jim Doolin, Massachusetts Port Authority (MASSPORT); Alden Gifford, Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center (TIOBEC).

Peter Webber, acting chair, called the meeting to order and declared a quorum.

Approval of minutes from October 16, 2001

There was a motion made to accept the minutes of October 16, 2001.

The motion was approved.

Operations Committee

George Price reported that the water transportation subcommittee of the Operations committee has reviewed several options to address park transportation needs in 2002 and beyond, but found that options are limited by the existing structure. He explained that the current arrangement has the DEM and MDC managing the contract for the park, even though water transportation is, or soon will be, provided to park locations managed by other Partners. A major concern is the lack of funding for the water shuttle service between the islands.

Terry Savage made a motion to request the Partnership, through its water transportation subcommittee, take responsibility for the water transportation contract, relying on the Island Alliance for its business purposes. The Island Alliance is a legislated member of the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership for financial and business purposes under Public Law 104-333 which established the national park area. The Island Alliance will coordinate activities with the water transportation subcommittee of the Partnership Operations Committee and specific affected island owners.

The Partners discussed the motion. Samantha Overton Bussell voiced her support of the concept and said the liability responsibility will have to be researched. Kathy Abbott stated the Island Alliance Board of Directors has yet to consider and vote on the issue.

Vivien Li, The Boston Harbor Association, stated the need to increase routes and keep prices affordable for the public. She recognized that this was a very difficult task, as water transportation often requires subsidies, which may be difficult to

obtain from the private sector. She requested that the public input continue if the contract gets turned over to a private organization like Island Alliance.

Peter Webber said that the agencies share the philosophy of greater access and affordable process, as does the Island Alliance. Kathy Abbott reminded all that the transportation subcommittee of the Partnership would be managing the terms and details of the contract. Peter Lewenberg, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, stated that having Island Alliance bid the contract would not be a shift in direction other than gaining the ability to be flexible. Island Alliance will have more flexibility to fund the water shuttle portion of the service, and would be in a position to convert any surplus revenues toward park-wide projects.

Brad Swing, Office of Environmental Services City of Boston, recognized that this would be a very important step for the Partnership as it would be the first time they would be acting as a legally recognized entity. He stated that the agencies will need time to discuss possible legal ramifications. Linda responded that since the Island Alliance would be entering into the contract, the process should be fairly quick, as the change may not effect anyone but the island owners that currently have water transportation.

Jim Doolin requested that the term "competitively bid" be added to the motion read by Terry Savage. **The motion was amended and was unanimously approved.**

Suzanne Gall Marsh, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, stated concern about the term of the new contract, and suggested an interim agreement that was short term. She also stated the importance of flexibility and cautioned against a sole source contract and reminded all that the state had managed contracts that included privately owned islands and multi-vendors in the past.

Maynard stated that the reality of the situation is that the park has low visitation compared to its potential. The more people that visit, the more attractive the water transportation contract will be to vendors.

Planning Committee

Linda Haar reported on the Planning Committee meeting held on December 12 (notes attached). She said that the group developed a work plan for 2002, and she described the specific tasks the committee will focus on.

Partnership Meetings

Linda Haar reported that a group met on December 3, to discuss ways to make the Partnership meetings more effective. The focus of the Partnership the last few years had been on the development of the general management plan. Now, the Partnership has endorsed the plan and is moving into the implementation phase. It was thought that the meeting structure should change to adjust to this change in focus.

The group made recommendations (see attached notes). The Partners discussed the recommendations and there was general agreement. One suggestion, which would change the meeting frequency to a bi-monthly schedule, would require a change in bylaws. Samantha Overton Bussell suggested that flexibility be built into the language, as an every other month schedule may not always be the most efficient. George Price, NPS was asked to draft the changes in language of the Bylaws for review at the next meeting.

Gary McCann, Muhheconneuk Intertribal Committee on Deer Island, asked if this would also effect the committee meeting schedules. Linda answered that it only would pertain to the Partnership meetings. Suzanne Gall Marsh requested that the Advisory Council be invited to participate in the Partnership retreat. Karen O'Donnell, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, said that she hoped that the orientation trips to the islands would continue.

Marketing Committee

Peter Lewenberg reported on the Marketing Committee meeting of December 11. He said that the park website was improved and will now allow partners to enter their own events directly onto the site, and will give visitors an easy interface to search for programs and events. The committee discussed the annual events calendar and made the recommendation to rely more on the website for advertisement and move away from the very expensive printed brochure and move to a simpler printed product.

Peter said that the group also discussed the marketing strategy for 2002. He requested that Partners submit their events early so that they can take advantage of many advertising opportunities that are out there and could be lost if delayed. They can be submitted directly to Mary Raczko at the Project Office. He stated that it is very important to offer new programs to increase visitation.

Bruce Jacobson, NPS, reported that the sign project is moving forward. He said that the contractors went to several islands with mock-ups of the island identification signs to get general ideas about where they should be located and what they should look like.

Advisory Council

Tom Lindberg, Co-Chair, said that the council is looking for a keynote speaker for its annual meeting. The next meeting will be a study session on January 10 to plan for the annual meeting.

Public Comment

Tom Lindberg said that the MWRA is planning to tear down the construction support building (CSB) on Deer Island. He suggested that if the Partnership has any interest in the building that they act quickly. A motion was made to direct George Price to send a letter on behalf of the Partnership requesting that the

MWRA board defer their final decision on the fate of the CSB for 90 days to allow time to work with them to review any possible reuse options. **The motion was approved.**

Gary McCann passed out 4 handouts, information on Department of Defense American Indian and Alaska Native Policy and three resolutions (attached). He drew attention to resolution SPO-01-035. Peter Webber suggested that Gary submit this information now to the Partners and for review as a potential agenda item for another meeting. He also requested that they provide a signed copy.

New Business

Peter Webber announced that the State of Massachusetts, as part of the Manage by Results Initiative, is looking at the possibility of consolidating and unifying management of the Harbor Islands. He said that discussions are in the very early stages and any change like this would require legislation and review by the Governor. He said that the topic will be discussed in further detail at the January meeting. He made clear that this is focused on the Harbor Islands and is not intended to be a precursor to other consolidation among the agencies.

Samantha Overton Bussell added that the Commissioner of the MDC has been a supporter of the plan.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 PM.