

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership  
Meeting Minutes  
Hale & Dorr, 60 State Street, 26<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston,  
February 26, 2002, 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM**

PRESENT: Claudia Smith-Reid, Edith Andrews, 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); Alden Gifford, Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center (TIOBEC); Jim Doolin, Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport).

Peter Webber, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order and declared a quorum.

**Approval of minutes from January 16, 2002**

Alden Gifford made a motion to accept the minutes of January 16, 2002

**The motion was approved.**

**Water Transportation**

Peter Lewenberg, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, said that the water transportation subcommittee of the Operations Committee has been working on the water transportation services for the coming season. They have researched many options in an effort to continue the free water shuttle services. They continue to explore several different options including possible EOTC grants, possible mitigation funds, as well as potential corporate funding sources through the Island Alliance. There have been no funds identified for this summer as yet.

Peter said that one available option is to fund the cost of the shuttle through an increase in the ferry price. The subcommittee suggested a \$1 rate increase (\$9 for adults). Peter reminded all that the fare has not increased in 5 years. He said that a \$9 or \$10 fee would be in line with a movie ticket and is still a good value. The subcommittee also wanted to continue to offer multiple ride discounts, a family rate and the opportunity for underserved populations to obtain free tickets.

The Partners discussed the issue.

Sam Overton said that it was important for the program to be self-sustaining and if the fare was raised \$2, \$10 for an adult ticket would still be a good value for the visitor. Terry Savage stated that low prices sometimes make a product seem undesirable, and there could be a marketing advantage to staying competitive with other attractions. Rick Nolan, Boston Harbor Cruises, stated that an increase of \$2 for an adult ticket, and \$1 for seniors, children and students was required to fund the shuttle. This was based on current ridership figures. He

stated concern about running the free shuttle if visitation dropped. Jim Doolin asked if an increase in price had negatively impacted other programs like the whale watch trips; Rick answered that ridership had increased the past year. Kathy Abbott, Island Alliance, pointed out that there is no reason to assume that raising prices of the park ferry will mean less ridership. She also said that increased marketing efforts could dramatically raise numbers. Kathy pointed out that the income from this rate hike would not be going back to the park. Suzanne Gall Marsh, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, stated that this could be a revenue generating opportunity and suggested that Boston Harbor Cruises return a portion of the proceeds to the park. Peter Lewenberg said that it was not possible this year, as the contract is held with the state, but could be an option for future contracts, if Island Alliance acts as the park's agent.

Sam Overton made a motion to amend the water transportation contract to allow Boston Harbor Cruises to raise the fares within the limits discussed in order to fund the water shuttle for this coming season. **The motion was unanimously passed.**

### **Managing for Results Initiative**

Peter Webber gave an update on the Managing for Results Initiative regarding the consolidation of agencies on the harbor islands. There are two parallel tracks in motion, one legislative and one budget that are moving forward. The agencies are working together on an interim plan for the transition that will meet park opening dates.

### **Island Alliance Report**

Kathy Abbott reported that the Island Alliance raised just over \$1 million in 2001. This included \$833k in gifts and pledges and \$172k in-kind.

Barbara Waters gave a fundraising report to the Partnership. She said that foundation gifts awarded in 2001 are enabling the Island Alliance to: expand the Youth Corps program into a year round career mentoring effort; to finish Phase One of the Curriculum Project and to begin a new focus on wide-spread teacher training; and to help host the upcoming Biodiversity Seminar and publish the findings of the scientists involved in the inventory and monitoring studies.

She stated that while they were disappointed by the sad timing of launching a Corporate membership effort the first week of September, there were gains this year in foundation grants awarded, in special events, in revenue generation and there was less reliance on government funds. She announced that this year they received 100% board support and the Drumlin Society membership was tripled.

To increase public awareness, Island Alliance held two new, successful events last year, a triathlon and concert. Also, Cathy Stone graciously hosted a house party to introduce the park to residents of Beacon Hill and Back Bay.

The goal for Island Alliance in 2002 is to raise another million and increase activities to bring new visibility to the park for the fifth season. New plans include a spring appeal, a spring house party, a summer fundraiser, the 24-hour Balance Bar Challenge, one or two concerts and another great dinner. They are also renewing efforts for a Corporate membership program and already have a \$10k pledge from Fleet.

### **Marketing Committee**

Peter Lewenberg introduced Bill Davis of Partners+Simons who introduced the Marketing Communications Plan. Copies of the presentation were distributed. The marketing objective of the plan is to increase visitation and revenue. The communication objective is to increase and enhance park perceptions. Bill described strategies and tactics to accomplish the objectives.

Part of the plan is to maximize brand unity for the park in order to build awareness through a series of new graphic images for the park. The series would be similar to the very successful program developed for Golden Gate National Park. Each island would have its own image, as would the park as a whole. The Marketing Committee has been working closely with the individual island owners and brought the proposal to the Partnership to move forward with the concept this season. Ted Wright, a world class graphics designer, has donated the full rights of the images to Island Alliance.

The artwork was presented and well received. There was general agreement that the images were attractive, marketable, and hopefully would generate interest and inspire people to visit.

Two images were discussed in detail. There were concerns stated about the lighthouse being used as the park-wide image. There was general support of the image, if the connection to the city and the other islands could be made.

The Deer Island image was discussed at great length. Concerns were stated about the inability to capture the entire history of a single island. For example, the image of the digesters on Deer Island ignores the Native American history on the island. Edith Andrews suggested that the image for the island could include the Native American memorial once it was completed. Concern was stated that if changes were not made at the beginning, they might never be made. There was also a suggestion to graphically incorporate a connection to nature and clean water into the image.

Peter Webber made a motion to endorse the marketing and communications plan and approve the logo approach with more work on the park logo and the Deer Island image. **The motion was carried.**

### **Advisory Council**

Tom Lindberg, Co-Chair, stated that the Advisory Council should be briefed on issues before the Partnership votes, so that the voting members can have the opportunity to discuss the issue with the council, ensuring that the council's opinions can be properly represented. Tom invited Partners to the Annual meeting on March 7. He also cautioned against marketing and branding a product before you have something to show.

### **Public Comment**

Suzanne Gall Marsh, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, stated that although the park is scheduled to open May 4, many details are very vague. Staffing is always an issue.

Suzanne asked the Partners to consider other alternatives before raising the ferry cost to pay for the shuttle. She suggested splitting the financial burden between Partners and other interested parties. Peter Webber assured her that the Transportation subcommittee has explored all available options for this year. Suzanne asked the Partnership to only consider the minimum increase absolutely necessary to cover the actual costs.

Sam Sapiel, Penobscot Nation, raised the issue of the resolutions that were distributed at the last meeting by Gary McCann, Muhheconneuk Intertribal Committee on Deer Island. The Partners discussed their interest in having the issue on a future meeting agenda.

George Price announced the Biodiversity Seminar on May 30 and the seasonal positions available in the park.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 PM .