

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership  
Meeting Minutes  
WilmerHale, 60 State Street, 26<sup>th</sup> floor, Boston, MA  
November 17, 2009, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM**

**Attendees:** Maureen Cavanaugh, Bill Hale, Greg Ketchen, and Charles Norris—Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Tom Powers and Joel Reck—Boston Harbor Island Alliance; James Hunt, III, and Rich McGuinness—Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Antonia Pollak—City of Boston; Susan Kane and Karl Pastore—Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); Jim Doolin—Massachusetts Port Authority; Marianne Connolly for Fred Laskey—Massachusetts Water Resources Authority; Bruce Jacobson—National Park Service (NPS); Peg Wheeler—The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR).

James Hunt, Acting Chair, welcomed all and declared a quorum. Partners introduced themselves. There was a motion to approve the minutes from the September 15, 2009, meeting of the Partnership. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

### **2016 Strategic Plan**

Bruce Jacobson, Superintendent, said that one of the actions in the park's strategic plan was to review the structure of the Partnership. The Planning Committee reviewed the purpose and structure the Partnership Board, specifically the standing committees. The committee recommends the Partnership continue to meet 4-6 times per year. The Planning Committee noted the current structure is not working well for the majority of the five standing committees. The Planning Committee recommends adopting an ad-hoc committee structure, with the expectation that the Operations/Water Transportation Committee will continue to meet regularly.

The Partners discussed and agreed the committees do work best when working on substantive issues, either to move projects or ideas forward or to problem solve. They determined an ad-hoc structure would be conducive to this. A motion was made to accept the recommendation of the Boston Harbor Islands Planning Committee to revise the Partnership bylaws to reflect an ad-hoc committee structure.

**The motion was unanimously approved.** An ad hoc nominating/bylaws committee (Bruce Jacobson, Jim Doolin, Antonia Pollak, Susan Kane and Maureen Cavanaugh) was appointed by the Chair to draft the requested changes and also to recommend Partnership officers for the next term.

### **Capital Funding**

Bruce Jacobson Superintendant, reported he is in the process of updating capital funding requests currently in the NPS project management system, in preparation for an upcoming NPS funding call. He requested all Partnership agencies submit funding requests for capital projects by December 30 for consideration. The NPS funding call is for the period of federal fiscal years 2011 to 2015.

Bruce invited all to an ad-hoc committee meeting on January 12, to set Partnership funding priorities. The purpose of the meeting will be to identify the top projects endorsed by the Partnership as a whole. The Partners discussed and agreed that defining a Partnership priority list was a useful exercise. It could help give direction to Partnership activities and could also help individual organizations gain support for the project, by showing the broad support the project is receiving. It was mentioned that there has been some success with getting this type of funding, and it seemed an effective technique to request smaller pieces of a big project. Showing matching funds by Partnership agencies is always helpful.

### **Volunteers**

Mary Raczko, NPS, gave a report on park-wide volunteer activities. This past year, there were 2,597 volunteers that served 20,905 hours. The numbers of both volunteers and hours rose this year, despite the cancellation of one program with significant volunteer participation, the Boston Light Tours. This rise was partially due to improvements of the methods to capture hours, and partially due

to the increased activity, a growing citizen science program and in particular some large events, like Coastsweep and Halloween on the Harbor.

Mary explained that volunteers contribute in a variety of ways, and passed out a chart (attached) that showed the breakdown of different activities, and volunteer statistics over the past 5 years. She highlighted last year's participation in Massachusetts Park Serve Day, when 400 volunteers helped plant beach grass on Spectacle Island. The park hosted 10% of all the Massachusetts volunteers serving that day. Mary also reported a statistic of volunteer value as established by Independent Sector, an accepted source of standards used government and non-profit organizations. The published rate of \$20.25 per volunteer hour translates into over \$423k worth of value to the park. She mentioned that there are real costs to the park to keep the volunteer program running. Staff time, materials and services are significant expenses. Water transportation just to bring volunteer groups to the islands last year totaled over \$20k.

Stephanie Schorrow, Volunteers and Friends of Boston Harbor Islands, gave a presentation of Friends activities. She said the Friends provide interpretive and visitor services support and serve as campground hosts. The Friends also offer tours and host special programs throughout the year. She highlighted the Library Legacy Project; more than 60 libraries have received Boston Harbor Islands books and materials. Several libraries have also displayed exhibits.

### **Advisory Council**

Maureen Cavanaugh, Council Chair, reported that the Council last met on September 3, 2009, and continued work to develop a messaging platform for community outreach. The Council will meet next on December 2, 2009.

### **New Business**

Tom Powers reported he recently attended a few meetings with a partnership theme, one hosted by Commissioner Sullivan for all of Massachusetts State Park partners and two national conferences hosted by the Friends Alliance for park partners nationwide.

Bruce said the NPS is engaged in two major initiatives on the national level, following the priorities of Secretary of the Interior Salazar. One is to increase youth involvement in national parks, through employment opportunities and expanded educational programs and activities. The other initiative relates to climate change, and involves boosting scientific research and educational programs, as well as developing adaptation strategies. He said the park has already received some funding for these initiatives, and encouraged Partners to think of other ways to collaborate.

### **Public Comment**

Suzanne Gall Marsh, Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, asked how the items in the strategic plan were ordered and prioritized. Bruce Jacobson responded that the themes and strategies contained in the strategic plan are not arranged in priority order. Suzanne also recommended that the park hire a full-time volunteer coordinator.

Chris Montgomery, Advisory Council member, announced the Native American memorial project on Deer Island is fully funded, approved and moving forward. The artist is now actively working on the sculpture.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM.