

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership  
Meeting Minutes  
Environmental Protection Agency  
5 Post Office Square, 15<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston, MA  
January 15, 2013, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM**

**Attendees:** Maureen Cavanaugh—Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Tom Powers—Boston Harbor Island Alliance (BHIA); Richard McGuinness—Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Antonia Pollak and Brian Swett—City of Boston; Phil Griffiths, Susan Kane, Ed Lambert, and Samantha Overton Bussell—Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); Marianne Connolly and Fred Laskey—Massachusetts Water Resources Authority; Michael Caldwell and Bruce Jacobson—National Park Service (NPS); Arthur Pearson, Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center (TIOBEC); Peg Wheeler—The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR); CDR Jason Smith—United States Coast Guard (USCG).

Arthur Pearson, Chair, welcomed all and called the 125<sup>th</sup> meeting to order. A quorum was present. Partners and audience members introduced themselves. A motion was made to approve the minutes of the meeting held on September 18, 2012. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

#### **Finance Committee**

Bruce Jacobson said a Partner is needed to serve as Chair of the Finance Committee, as the position is currently vacant. He introduced Sarah Waterworth, who staffs the committee on behalf of NPS. Sarah thanked all Partners that submitted data for the annual financial accountability report. She passed out the preliminary report for 2011. Sarah also distributed the standard operating procedure for the report for Partnership approval. A motion was made to adopt the procedure to replace all prior versions. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

#### **Water Transportation Subcommittee**

Bruce Jacobson passed out a water transportation service timeline developed by the Planning Committee. He introduced Jane Ellis, BHIA, and Bill and Melissa Walker, Boston's Best Cruises (BBC). Jane distributed a report on ferry and shuttle ridership and visitor cost over the past several years. Bill Walker provided information on water transportation system costs. Ferry ridership in 2012 was up over last year and more than doubled since 2004. Last season, BBC added 64,000 seats on the ferry by adjusting the schedule and adding additional service. In 2012, ferry ridership was 129k including interisland shuttle ridership of 11k.

Jane explained that the ferries to Georges and Spectacle Islands operate without subsidy, but the interisland shuttle requires one. Commissioner Lambert said DCR has funded the shuttle for several years, and it may not be feasible to maintain the same level of funding. Last year, the service was expanded because Department of Environmental Protection added additional funding to that of DCR. This year, DCR asked for a less costly, more targeted approach to service. Commissioner Lambert said DCR continues to fund the shuttle system as a short-term solution only, and that a long-term solution needs to be found. He said that when the next RFP for boat service is issued the ferry and shuttle systems might be requested as separate services. Bruce said NPS has funding for a study to help inform water transportation planning efforts.

The proposed 2013 schedule was presented for comment. Partners discussed, and expressed the desire to retain as much service as possible. They discussed ways to operate shuttle system at less cost to the park. The discussion included the mention of the possibly raising

fares for the ferry, adding a fee for the shuttle, creating a single or multi-island ticket, increasing fares only at peak times (weekends), or adjusting the shuttle schedule to serve only the busy times of the week. It was suggested that a yearly pass program could be a great deal for families and also front-end the cash flow for the season. Partners recognized the need for good data to base decisions on service. Though always cautious about raising fares, there was general agreement that a modest increase in fare may be necessary so that service could be maintained without drastic cuts.

Partners authorized the water transportation subcommittee to continue working with the vendor to finalize the schedule and fares for the 2013 season.

### **Planning Committee**

Bruce Jacobson reported the park is working with graduate students from Boston University that are reviewing the park's general management plan. He invited Partners to give their input during the research phase; students will be in contact. The students will present their recommendations at an evening meeting hosted by the Advisory Council.

### **Advisory Council**

Maureen Cavanaugh, Vice-Chair, said the council met on December 7, 2012, and engaged in a lively discussion about revitalizing the group. She said they discussed committee goals and challenges of getting new members and youth involved. The next meeting is the annual meeting on March 6. Sally Snowman, Keeper of Boston Light, is the invited speaker.

### **Other Business**

CDR Jason Smith invited partners to participate in a Boston Harbor Oil Spill Workshop. He passed out the exercise overview.

Bruce Jacobson said that Boston Harbor Islands Stewardship Research and Learning Center was established at University of Massachusetts–Boston. He announced seasonal job announcements for NPS are available and can be found at [USAjobs.gov](http://USAjobs.gov).

Tom Powers said BHIA is holding their Gala on June 20<sup>th</sup>. He invited Partners to recommend nominees for the private sector award.

### **Public Comment**

The upcoming winter wildlife cruise is sold out.

Hugh Hawthorne, NPS, said the Getting Youth to the Islands Committee plans to regroup in the next couple of months. Stay tuned for a meeting date to be announced.

Suzanne Gall Marsh, Volunteers and Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, invited all to the Friends annual New Year's Day trip to Spectacle Island. She also announced two upcoming talks sponsored by Boston Public Library that focus on the Harbor Islands. The talks will happen in March, and she will lead one and Ellen Berkland, State Archeologist will lead the other.

The meeting was adjourned.