

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership
Meeting Minutes
WilmerHale, 60 State Street, 26th Floor, Boston, MA
September 15, 2015, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM**

Attendees: Maureen Cavanaugh and Elizabeth Solomon—Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council; Phil Griffiths—Boston Harbor Island Alliance (BHIA); Chris Busch—Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA); Susan Kane and Commissioner Carol Sanchez—Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); Stewart Dalzell—Massachusetts Port Authority; Marianne Connolly and Fred Laskey—Massachusetts Water Resources Authority; Conrad Crawford—The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR); CDR David O’Connell—United States Coast Guard (USCG).

Phil Griffiths, Acting Chair, opened the meeting and welcomed all. A quorum was present. There was a motion made to approve the minutes of the September 15, 2015, meeting. **The motion was unanimously approved.**

Summer Season Wrap-up

Susan Kane gave a report on the highlights of the summer season (presentation attached). One major accomplishment was that the public ferries started on time despite the many challenges the harsh winter created. Power and water was delivered to Spectacle Island all season long because of the demolition of the Long Island Bridge and the resulting loss of utility lines. There was minimal impact on the public. Programming and events were expanded on Peddocks Island, and the first wedding was held in the newly restored chapel. Boston Light trips resumed and Georges Island was the location of several art installations during the “Isles of Arts Initiative”. Susan reported that there are several plans and projects are underway for next season including: 6 new yurts for Peddocks Island; safety fencing installed at Fort Warren; a full condition assessment of Fort Warren; a full condition assessment of all island docks; the development of a Resource Management Plan, an expansion of youth engagement programs; a moorings assessment; and, Hingham Gateway improvements.

Fred Laskey conveyed thanks to all the staff working on the islands and said it was a remarkable accomplishment to have such a successful season after the harsh winter weather and loss of utilities to Spectacle Island.

Elisabeth Solomon asked if the environmental cost of shipping bottles of water was evaluated. Susan said it was a temporary fix for the season and utility service will be restored by next season. Susan mentioned that they have started installing bottle fillers on islands, and desire to have more.

Coastal Vulnerability Mapping Project

Marc Albert, NPS, said that the park was the recipient of a George Melendez Wright Young Leader in Climate Change Intern to pilot a program for long-term study of sea-level rise and coastal dynamics. He introduced Michael Endicott, YLCC Intern, who gave a presentation on his project. Michael said that the data he collected this year contributes to the initial steps needed toward the development of a dynamic model of coastal processes in the harbor, and builds upon the extensive geological research conducted by Boston University and Northeastern University. Next steps will be to complete park-wide mapping of sentinel sites and coastal topography and to develop wave and sediment transit data. A coastal vulnerability assessment can then be prepared that would help managers understand the impacts of sea-level rise on the natural and cultural resources and facilities in the park and help inform managers as they develop adaptation strategies to climate change.

2016 Anniversary Planning

Phil Griffiths said that 2016 is the summer of anniversaries, the 10th of the re-opening of Spectacle Island, the 20th of becoming a national park, the 100th of the National Park Service and the 300th of Boston Light. He said that park managers are working to integrate the celebrations into ongoing activities and also expand free access programs and family-friendly programming. A workshop is planned to happen in the fall. Conrad Crawford added that 2016 is also the 125th anniversary of The Trustees of Reservations.

USCG Planning and Programming Update

CDR O'Connell said that yesterday was Boston Light's 299th birthday and lighthouses all over the nation sent birthday wishes through social media outlets. He added that Boston Light Tours resumed and despite a delayed opening, had a very successful season that exceeded expectations. He said there is the desire to expand the program, but that it is challenging to do so, due to the time involved in getting people up and down the tower. USCG is working with BHIA and NPS with the hope to find a way to increase access.

CDR O'Connell said that USG has started a program called *Paddle Smart* to bring greater awareness to paddle sport safety. He said that in this district, a high number of recreational boater fatalities are from canoes and kayaks. Paddlers are encouraged to wear life jackets and to label their boats with their name and contact numbers, which can help with search and rescue efforts.

Advisory Council

Elizabeth Solomon, Chair, said the council continues to work on building membership to be more inclusive and representative of the Boston area. She said the council looks forward to collaborating with the Partnership, and assisting with their efforts. Elizabeth said a number of members are interested in helping with the development of the resource management plan and assisting with efforts that increase youth engagement.

Phil Griffiths said the Partnership welcomed their help and looked forward to finding ways to work together.

Public Comment

Chris Busch said that Boston Redevelopment Authority has been working to develop a Waterfront Activation Plan that includes supporting access to the Harbor Islands. He invited all to an upcoming Municipal Harbor Planning Advisory Committee Meeting on September 16.

The meeting was adjourned.