

**Boston Harbor Islands Partnership
Meeting Minutes
WilmerHale, 60 State Street, 26th Floor, Boston, MA
May 17, 2016, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM**

Attendees: Michael Creasey and Giles Parker—National Park Service (NPS); David O’Connell—United States Coast Guard (USCG); Susan Kane—Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR); Frederick Laskey—Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA); Fran Blanchard—The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR); Phil Griffiths—Boston Harbor NOW (BHN).

Jim Scully, acting vice-chair, opened the meeting. The minutes of the meeting on March 15, 2016, were approved.

2016 Summer of Anniversaries

Rebecca Smerling said that she was working with Partners to develop this season’s park newspaper. She said there is a robust calendar of programming – things going on almost every day, engaging visitors of all ages. Through a grant from the National Park Foundation, they have gotten funding for a healthy trails program and yoga. The regularly recurring offerings will include specialty programs targeting a variety of age groups including millennials and seniors. Special events will include the Spectacle 5K, three free ferry days (park opening day, Free Fun Friday, free day on Founders Day), and Boston Light’s 300th anniversary celebration on Georges Island. Rebecca said advertisements have been placed in dozens of papers and magazines. She mentioned they are pursuing new tourism industry partnerships and that MBTA donated free ad space. She said there is also a heavy focus on spreading the word through social media outlets and distributed some handy cards with the park’s Facebook page /bostonharborislands, Twitter handle @34islandsboston and Instagram @bostonharborislands. She invited all to use various hashtags #FindYourPark, #bostonharborislands. Rebecca also encouraged everyone to spread the word about the free programming for community groups, library pass program and photo contest.

Fort Warren Structural Assessment

Jessica Rowcroft, DCR, gave a presentation on the Fort Warren Structural Assessment. She said GZA was hired to do the work. She explained that they used an ESRI collector app to document the facilities, and that it will be used on an on-going basis to document details about the condition of the structure and keep it up-to-date. It has the ability to store photos linked to location points and capture notes related to that place. Jessica said they also looked at the condition of the seawalls. They gathered much needed information, and even located two rooms in the fort that had not been on any prior map.

Jessica said that the report is on schedule to be done by June 30. It is expected that this data will help both inform visitors and help managers prepare funding requests. The report will include budget estimates for work that is identified.

Climate Ready Boston

Mia Goldwasser gave a presentation on the Climate Ready Boston project. It is attached. She said it is all part of *Imagine Boston 2030*. She encouraged Partners to contact her at Mia.Goldwasser@boston.gov with any questions.

Preparedness for Response

LT Kristina Butler gave a presentation on the "Plymouth to Salisbury, MA Area Committee & Area Contingency Plan". It is attached. She said it requires interagency coordination to protect for and respond to coastal environmental threats. She encouraged all to contact her at 617.223.3046 or Kristina.i.butler@uscg.mil.

Boston's Harbor Islands: Research and Design for an Urban National Park

Ethan Carr, University of Massachusetts Amherst, said his 2nd year students had worked on a project developing 2 concepts for looking at the future landscape of Long Island during a 7 week studio. The students presented their ideas. They said they looked at the cultural heritage and implication of bridge coming down, and imagined what could the island look like an urban national park in the future if the bridge is rebuilt and if ecological stewardship approach was used. The group discussed their ideas.

Boston Harbor Now

Phil Griffiths said that the merger of Boston Harbor Island Alliance and The Boston Harbor Association happened on April first, and Boston Harbor NOW was formed. He said it offers a great opportunity to do a lot more work supporting the park and the harbor. He announced that a Kathy Abbott was chosen as the President and CEO and she will start on May 31st. He said the organization will be structured with a board of Trustees and an Advisory Council. The idea is that they will spread the wealth of the organization on new things that will allow them to create a stronger, better voice than they had in the past. They will keep what they have been doing as a baseline, and build on that to do new things. Phil invited everyone is invited to the gala on June 23rd on Georges. .

Partner Updates and Other Business

Fred Laskey, MWRA said that the State Department organized 32 diplomats from around the world to visit Deer Island to see the benefits of environmental cleanup. The group enjoyed the tour and seemed quite impressed. Fred said the plans to build a new nice fish pier are moving forward.

Susan Kane, DCR, reported that Spectacle Island Marina is closed; there are a lot of repairs that need to be done. The new yurts on Peddocks Island should be ready to go by the end of the week.

Fran Blanchard, TTOR, said that her organization is also undergoing change and reassigning staff. She said one of her most pressing issues at Worlds End is parking.

CDR David O'Connor, USCG, said that CDR Brad Kelly will be taking the place of former USCG partnership representative starting at the next meeting

Public Comment

Suzanne Gall Marsh, Friends of the Boston Harbor Islands, said FBHI had their annual meeting on Deer Island and it was a great day. She also said longtime volunteer Charlie Boyer passed away. He worked for many years as a volunteer for the park. He was a dedicated volunteer and recently the winner of the NPS Northeast Regional Hartzog Award for Individual Volunteer Service. FBHI has a memorial fund raised in Charlie's honor. They've thought about different ways to name something after him through DCR.

The meeting was adjourned.