

**Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Partnership Office, 15 State Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Boston, MA**  
**Wednesday, December 9th, 2015, 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM**

Elizabeth Solomon, Chair, called the meeting to order. All council and audience members introduced themselves. Advisory Council approved minutes from the September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**2015 Highlights**

Phil Griffiths, Boston Harbor Island Alliance (BHIA), presented on 2015 Season Highlights including: surviving winter, the arts initiative, Boston Light, over 16,000 free trips to the islands and 2 free ferry days. He also talked about the increased interest in Peddocks Island.

Next, Phil presented some information from Boston Harbor Cruises (BHC). There had been operational changes for the 2015 season with the elimination of triangulated service between Spectacle and Georges, and a total ridership of 109,661. Total ridership was slightly down, but there were several bad weather weekends which can account for that. There were 10 trips to Spectacle and 4 trips to Georges that sold out. The direct service to the hub islands was found to serve the public much better. Phil also noted that that traffic to BHC website from bostonharborislands.org decreased, which was interpreted as a positive change because visitors got the information they needed from the park website and didn't have to search further to find it.

Lou Gainor asked if the numbers presented included free trips, which Phil confirmed they did. He then asked how private boaters are counted. Phil and Giles said that on island staff does keep record of it and those numbers are available. There was also a question asked if we are close to reaching the capacity on the islands. Susan Kane, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) said that there are different limitations on different islands. For instance, park managers are working toward getting another float on Georges so that more boats can be accommodated, as restrictions now are on boat size and traffic. There are also bathroom facility limitations on Spectacle. Different activities have different staffing requirements.

**DCR Island Operations**

Susan Kane presented on DCR Island Operations. She mentioned the rough winter, the success of the Peddocks 5k road run, as well as the utility disruption on Spectacle Island due to the demolition of the Long Island Bridge. She also said that Peddocks Island was a focus right now and has lots of potential. She also said that park managers are working to improve public access to the islands, and to improve programming with day-long and in depth educational experiences. This year, DCR had 54 seasonal and 13 full time staff. Susan said that a safety fencing project on Georges Island is underway.

Bill Reardon asked about the mention of 500 new moorings in Susan's presentation. Susan said that there had been a Boston Harbor Islands Moorings Assessment that proposed 500 new moorings. Phil said that there was clearly demand, but permitting would be a challenge.

**DCR Resource Management Plan**

Susan shared that DCR is required to do a Resource Management Plan (RMP) for every park. She said that RMPs can take 1-5 years to develop and it depends on the complexity of the park. She said that the effort to develop one for the Boston Harbor Islands Complex began awhile ago. It's going to be a long process, but once there is a draft she said that it will be distributed.

She said that the Stewardship Council meetings are public meetings that the Advisory Council members can attend. There may be more than one more public planning meeting. Susan mentioned that stakeholders like the members of the Boston Harbor Islands Partnership have never before been included in RMP development, so this one will be particularly well informed and vetted.

In response, Elizabeth asked what a realistic level of input would be from the Advisory Council. Susan said that they could have tremendous input.

The Advisory Council decided to create a RMP working group. Volunteers for RMP working group: Lou Gainor, Kelly Hurstak, Elizabeth Solomon, Carl Johnson, Heather Deschenes, Bill Hale, Pat Morss, and Walter Hope. Members who are not at the meeting will be invited to participate. Interested members can look at the DCR website for other DCR RMP's to get an idea of what RMP's contain.

### **Boston Harbor Islands Center**

Marc Albert, National Park Service said that the concept of a Boston Harbor Islands Center for research and learning is starting to build traction, particularly with University of Massachusetts—Boston and Suffolk University. He said that Meetings are happening to try to make the center a reality. A visioning session is planned to help move the idea forward. Heather Deschenes said that the NEAQ is playing an active listener role to see what their best involvement might be. Elizabeth asked if members of the Advisory Council will be invited to the visioning session. Marc said that while it should be a small group, anyone who is really interested should contact him.

### **Looking forward to 2016**

Giles Parker, National Park Service, talked about the NPS Centennial, Urban Agenda, and One NPS. He presented on the Urban Agenda and what the NPS role is in an urban setting. Today, one third of the National Parks are in urban areas. The NPS is reflecting to consider how to connect with that changing demographic. He also talked about One NPS and how we can use that to contribute to our partners' experience.

### **Council Business**

Elizabeth Solomon reported that there are 10 vacancies on the council. Additionally, there are 7 members with expired terms. We need to become active as a group to entice people to become involved. She proposed a forming a membership committee to help with recruitment and vetting process that would actively seeking out a diversity of opinions. Giles agreed that relevancy, diversity and inclusion should be a part of the Advisory Council.

Elizabeth asked the group for ideas on recruitment and suggested a membership committee be formed. Kelly offered to send out an email asking for interest in a committee – individuals can discuss and nominate voting partners and other membership issues.

Next, the council discussed planning for annual meeting. Typically there is a guest speaker and then elections. Elizabeth asked for suggestions for the speaker. Giles suggested Michael Creasey, although he admitted that it might be too NPS focused. He suggested someone from outside the park. Elizabeth said it might be good to get someone who can present on climate change. Lou suggested we get the Mayor of Boston. Elizabeth suggested that we could have a panel of people, which seemed to be a popular idea.

Heather mentioned that on March 9 there will be a huge high school science symposium – invites have already gone out. This will be on the same day as our meeting, but maybe there

would be people in town that could do both. Greg Abel suggested hosting a panel discussion. He gave the example of tourism professionals who could present on Boston tourism, but also give us feedback. Lou suggested that it would be good to get someone with a different perspective like a Native American speaker, a historian or a Peddocks resident.

Elizabeth suggested another popular opinion that we talk about the islands as a place where people were put away/aside. Kelly said she likes that, that it could make a good panel discussion. Greg said that maybe since all of these are good ideas we could do it at regular meetings too.

An annual meeting planning committee was formed, Elizabeth, Lou, Heather, and Suzanne volunteered to serve.

Suzanne suggested that maybe we can use the African Meeting House as a location. The other members of the approved of the idea, and Mary Raczko, National Park Service, said that she will look into it.

The next meeting will be March 9<sup>th</sup>, 6-8 pm.

**Meeting Adjourned.**

Boston Harbor Islands Advisory Council  
12/9/15 Meeting Attendees

**MEMBERS PRESENT (X)**

1. Greg Abel*	X
2. Neal Caten	
3. Maureen Cavanaugh	X
4. Heather Dechenes	X
5. Jane Ellis*	
6. John Emler	
7. Lou Gainor	X
8. Walter Hope	
9. Kelly Hurstak, Vice Chair	X
10. Carl Johnson	
11. Dale Linder	
12. Jim Martel	
13. Rob Moir	
14. Charlie Norris	X
15. Jim Peters	
16. Peter Rosen	
17. Elizabeth Solomon, Chair	X
18. Lauri Webster	
19. Susan Woods*	
20. Vacant Seat, Environmental	
21. Vacant Seat, Educational & Cultural	
22. Vacant Seat, Community	
23. Vacant Seat, Community	
24. Vacant Seat, Community	
25. Vacant Seat, Municipalities	
26. Vacant Seat, Municipalities	
27. Vacant Seat, Native American	
28. Vacant Seat, Native American	

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Marc Albert, NPS	X
Jennifer Bender	
Kristina Bergquist	X
Elisabeth Colby, NPS	X
Theresa Czerepica**	
Michael Endicott	
Jude Griffin	
Phil Griffiths, BHIA	X
Bill Hale**	
Elizabeth James-Perry	
Susan Kane, DCR	X
Liz Kay	
Steve Marcus, FBHI	
Elizabeth Medeiros	
Suzanne Gall Marsh** FBHI	X
Pat Morss**	
Giles Parker, NPS	X
Jonathan Perry	
James Poplasky	
Mary Raczko, NPS	X
Bill Reardon**	X
Sally Snowman, USCG	
Kristen Wyman	

\*pending member

**QUORUM Not PRESENT  
only 6 OF 16 OFFICIAL MEMBERS**

BHIA – Boston Harbor Island Alliance  
DCR – Department of Conservation and Recreation  
NPS – National Park Service  
TIOBEC-Thompson Island Outward Bound Education Center

\*\*Emeritus Council Member