

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
BOARD OF UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES  
FINAL MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING – March 27, 2025**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**Jack Chapin\*** (Designee of Christopher Mason, Acting Director of Environmental Law Enforcement)  
**Justin Malcolm\*** (Designee of Brona Simon, State Archaeologist)  
**Graham McKay\*** (Gubernatorial Appointee, Marine Archaeologist [at-large])  
**Jonathan Patton\*** (Designee of Gregory Robbins, Director of DCR Division of Waterways)  
**Daniel Sampson\*** (Designee of Alison Brizius, Director of Coastal Zone Management)  
**John Warner\*** (State Archivist)  
(\*present via remote access)

**David Robinson**, Director (Staff for the Board)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**Vincent Malkoski** (Gubernatorial Appointee, Dive Community Representative [organization])  
**Designee of Brona Simon** (Executive Director, Massachusetts Historical Commission)  
**VACANT** (Gubernatorial Appointee, Dive Community Representative [at-large])

**PROCEEDINGS:**

This hybrid-format (i.e., in-person and remote-access) public meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources (the Board or BUAR) was convened by its Director, David Robinson (Dave R), at 12:32 PM on March 27, 2025 in the 9<sup>th</sup> floor conference room #9128 at 100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900, in Boston, with a quorum of six (6) current members of the Board in attendance remotely, as confirmed by a roll-call.

The purpose of this public meeting was to conduct the BUAR's business that required the involvement of the full Board.

**Items on the agenda included:**

- approval of the January 30, 2025 Board meeting's minutes
- the Director's report
- Board Member reports
- a summary of the Board's Public Engagement Activities
- Old Business, and
- New Business.

Dave R explained that this meeting's hybrid format conforms with the Commonwealth's temporary provisions (effective through March 31, 2025) pertaining to the Open Meeting Law that were signed by Governor Healey on March 29, 2023. An extension of this law through June 2027 was passed by both branches of the Massachusetts Legislature on March 20, 2025, and this Bill is awaiting the Governor's signature to go into effect. These temporary provisions allow public bodies to continue holding their meetings remotely without a quorum of the public body physically present at a meeting location, and to provide "adequate, alternative" access to remote meetings. Board votes taken during this hybrid-format meeting were conducted through a roll-call, as required by MGL c. 30A, ss. 18-25.

Meeting ground-rules were reviewed and Board members, permittees, prospective permittees, and members of the public were all welcomed to the meeting by Dave R.

**1. MINUTES**

## **A. Minutes of the January 30, 2025 Meeting of the Board**

Dave R asked if the Board had any comments or corrections to the draft minutes of the Board's January 30, 2025 public meeting. There were no comments or corrections to the minutes. Daniel Sampson moved to accept the minutes of the Board's January 30, 2025 public meeting. Graham McKay seconded. Unanimous in favor by a roll-call vote. So voted.

## **2. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **A. Fieldwork**

- ***Conomo Point Shipwreck, Essex***

On April 1, 2025, the Board's staff will be joined by a group of citizen scientists and students, as well as the leadership and staff from the Essex Shipbuilding Museum, retired BUAR Director, Vic Mastone, and BUAR Board member, Graham McKay, in conducting a field-inspection and condition assessment of the Conomo Point shipwreck site in Essex. This inspection is part of BUAR's ongoing monitoring and documentation of the site since it was first reported eroding out of a mudflat near "Clammer's Beach" in 2022. The site is becoming increasingly exposed by erosion caused by a westward shift in the channel of Walker's Creek that empties into the Essex River adjacent to the east side of Conomo Point. The Board's staff is planning to add signage to the wreck site this Spring to inform the public of the site's fragility, approximate age, significance, and its ownership by the Commonwealth, as well as the potential penalties associated with breaking state laws by disturbing or removing items from the site.

### **B. Meetings**

- ***Native Land Conservancy Presentation: "How Tribal Nations are Leading the Way in Climate Change Adaptation, Planning and Resilience," Mashpee***

On February 18, 2025, the Board's staff met in Boston with former BUAR Board member and Sweden's Lund University Department of Archaeology and Ancient History Professor, Dr. Brendan Foley, to discuss potential future international research collaboration with Lund University. Included as part of this planned research would be radiocarbon dating of the 2019 North Plymouth intertidal bow find, performed by Dr. Foley's Lund University Geology Department colleague, Dr. Mats Rundgren. Funding for this dating was obtained by Lund University through a grant Dr. Foley prepared with BUAR's assistance. Preparations will soon be underway for obtaining a very small (1 mm<sup>3</sup>) sample of the bow for dating.

### **C. BUAR/CZM Project of Special Merit Update**

BUAR and CZM's work on the NOAA Office for Coastal Management's Project of Special Merit (or PSM) to assess the vulnerability of Massachusetts coastal cultural resources from coastal hazards and sea level rise is nearing its completion. Initial GIS mapping of the relative densities of vulnerable coastal cultural resources is completed. A second meeting of the Project Advisory Committee to review and get feedback on these initial maps took place on February 13, 2025. This meeting was followed by additional meetings with Massachusetts's Tribal communities to get feedback and identify with them areas of cultural sensitivity needing to be added to the mapping. Work is currently underway to complete by March 30, 2025 a geonarrative webpage providing a description of the project, its results, and recommendations, and a map-viewer interface. Once finalized, this geonarrative, along with the project's downloadable final report and mapping files, will be shared with the public via a link that will be added to the BUAR and CZM websites. Daniel Sampson, the PSM's co-lead with Dave R, added that the geonarrative webpage is intended to be an interactive tool for the interested public and for resource managers, alike, who will be able to use it as a baseline for future, more granular, second-tier vulnerability assessments conducted at municipal or local levels. The PSM's final Progress Report will be submitted to NOAA at the end of April 2025, and the project's Final Report will be completed and submitted to NOAA at the end of August 2025. Results from the project will also be used to assist CZM, BUAR, and other federal, state, local, and Tribal government agencies

prioritize areas of the coast where municipal and local-level adaptive management practices need to be developed and implemented as part of an overall coastal management strategy. A summary of the results and recommendations from the study will be presented at the May 29, 2025 Board meeting.

### **3. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS**

#### **A. Jonathan Patton**

Board Member, Jonathan Patton, reported on the status of DCR's "Pilot Historic Preservation Climate Resiliency Project," ongoing at the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (WBNERR). DCR's office of cultural resources, in cooperation with WBNERR staff, partners, and consultants, conducted archaeological reconnaissance/intensive (locational) survey for Washburn Island in Waquoit Bay, including the intertidal portions of the island. The project included in-depth historical background research, preliminary paleolandscape reconstruction of Washburn Island and Waquoit Bay using historical maritime charts, archaeological fieldwork, and ongoing ethnographic survey component to provide DCR and its partners comprehensive archaeological and historic preservation planning and contextual information for the cultural history of the island. The project has especially provided historical context for the extensive military modifications of the island during the 1940s as Camp Washburn, associated with earlier Army/Navy Amphibious Brigade development and training that culminated in the D-Day landings during WWII.

#### **B. Graham McKay**

Board Member, Graham McKay, reported out on a Massachusetts Office of Tourism-sponsored "Revolution 250" research project that he and Bethany Groff Dorau, Executive Director of Newburyport's Museum of Old Newbury recently completed and presented on. The project involved an examination of historical documents and charts that documented an effort in 1775 by a committee of Newburyport colonists to create harbor defenses against British naval attack for Newburyport during the American Revolutionary War. One of these defenses included the sinking of several piers that anchored rafts and "fire rafts" that served as obstacles to enemy vessels attempting to access the harbor. These piers remained in-place for approximately 100 years before they were removed by a harbor dredging project in the 1880s.

### **4. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES**

#### **A. BUAR/Hassanamisco Nipmuc Tribe Underwater Archaeology and Project Mishoon STEM Educational Program, Girls, Inc., Worcester**

On February 21, 2025, BUAR's staff and Hassanamisco Nipmuc Tribal Elder, Council-woman, educator, and long-time BUAR permittee and Director of Project Mishoon, Cheryl Stedtler, presented a STEM educational program on underwater archaeology and Project Mishoon to about 40 girls (ages K-4) during Girls, Inc.-Worcester's 2025 Winter Break Camp.

Girls, Inc. is a national program that has been in existence for 100 years, whose goal is to inspire all girls to be strong (healthy), smart (educated), and bold (independent). Girls, Inc. programs are designed to empower girls to succeed. As the oldest and only facility-based, girl-centered organization in Central Massachusetts, Girls Inc.-Worcester is unique among organizations serving youth, providing more than 1,000 girls in the Greater Worcester area with life-changing experiences and real solutions to the unique challenges that girls face. By offering research-based programming, girls learn to set and achieve goals, overcome obstacles, resist peer pressure, see college as attainable, and explore fields, such as STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math).

This was BUAR's first educational program with Girls, Inc.-Worcester. Dave R reported that the program was very well-received. The campers and Girls, Inc.-Worcester staff enjoyed and learned from the presentations and activities we did with them that focused on ideas and methods of doing archaeology underwater and on the Hassanamisco Nipmuc's Lake Quinsigamond-focused Project Mishoon. BUAR and the Tribe have open invitations from Girls, Inc.-Worcester to conduct other educational programs in the

future. Jennifer Casey, the Assistant Director of Community Programs, informed Dave R that they are looking into buying diving masks for the Summer Camp, so their campers can explore the shallow pond on the Girls, Inc.-Worcester property.

## **5. OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc., Special Use Permit (SUP 19-005), Marston Mills, Barnstable**

Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc.'s (AHS's) Special Use Permit (19-005) for the Mill Pond Improvements project area at Marston Mills in Barnstable was up for renewal. AHS's Principal, Meg Harper, had submitted a request to the Board's staff asking the Board to consider granting AHS an extension of their permit's expiration date until the Board's next regularly-scheduled public meeting. In circumstances such as this, it has been the Board's practice to grant up to two extensions of a permit's expiration date within a given permit year. This would be this permit's first extension. Ms. Harper was in attendance to represent this permit. Ms. Harper reported that the project remained on hold and that it was unknown when it would resume. Dave R advised Ms. Harper that if this extension request was approved by the Board, AHS could request a second extension at the Board's May 29, 2025 meeting, which would carry the permit's expiration date to the September 25, 2025 meeting. If at that time, the project was still on hold, AHS could either apply for renewal, or submit an annual report and allow the permit to naturally expire. Ms. Harper agreed with that approach. There was no further discussion.

Daniel Sampson moved to grant Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc. an extension of the expiration date of their Special Use Permit (19-005) for the Mill Pond Improvements project area at Marston Mills in Barnstable, with all the standard and special conditions in effect. The duration of this permit extension shall be until the next public meeting of the Board, currently scheduled for May 29, 2025. John Warner seconded. Unanimous in favor by a roll-call vote. So voted.

### **B. Neil Good, Reconnaissance Permit (REC 24-002), Waquoit Bay, Falmouth and Mashpee**

Neil Good's Reconnaissance Permit (24-002) for his Waquoit Bay site in Falmouth and Mashpee was up for renewal. Mr. Good had submitted a request to the Board's staff asking the Board to consider granting him an extension of their permit's expiration date until the Board's next regularly-scheduled public meeting. In circumstances such as this, it has been the Board's practice to grant up to two extensions of a permit's expiration date within a given permit year. This would be this permit's first extension. Mr. Good was in attendance to represent this permit. Mr. Good reported that he was happy that DCR had conducted an archaeological reconnaissance/ intensive (locational) survey of Washburn Island and expressed his hope that there will be additional phases of archaeological investigations on the island and in the area, as he considers it to be a truly important place. Mr. Good also reported that in November 2024, the location of a reported shipwreck in his Waquoit Bay permit area was surveyed using a Raymarine fish-finder, and that this survey acquired an acoustic contact that could be the remains of an upside-down boat. Mr. Good plans to continue his efforts to image this site, and is also hoping to coordinate with DCR and its consultant to see if more surveying could be done on Washburn Island with ground-penetrating radar (GPR) to look for archaeological evidence of a Viking presence. There was no further discussion.

Jonathan Patton moved to grant Neil Good an extension of his Reconnaissance Permit (24-002) for his Waquoit Bay site, with all standard conditions in effect, including the additional conditions that Mr. Good must:

- 1) coordinate his activities with the DCR Program Manager at the Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (Tonna-Marie Surgeon-Rogers)
- 2) maintain regular communication with the DCR State Parks Archaeologist (Jonathan Patton); and

- 3) maintain regular communication with the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe (David Weeden) and the Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) (Bettina Washington).

The duration of this permit extension shall be until the next public meeting of the Board, currently scheduled for May 29, 2025. John Warner seconded. Unanimous in favor by a roll-call vote. So voted.

**C. Raymond L. Hayes, Reconnaissance Permit (REC 07-001), Great Harbor, Woods Hole Falmouth**

Dr. Raymond L. Hayes's Reconnaissance Permit (07-001) for his Great Harbor, Woods Hole, Falmouth site was up for renewal. Dr. Hayes submitted a complete renewal application, fee payment, and annual report in accordance with the Board's regulations. Dr. Hayes was not in attendance to represent this permit. There was no further discussion.

Daniel Sampson moved to grant Dr. Raymond L. Hayes renewal of his Reconnaissance Permit (07-001) for the exploration and inspection of underwater archaeological resource(s) at his Great Harbor, Woods Hole, Falmouth site with all standard and special conditions in effect. The duration of this permit shall be one year from the date of issuance with its new expiration date set as March 27, 2026. John Warner seconded. Unanimous in favor by a roll-call vote. So voted.

**D. Michael Margulis, Reconnaissance Permit (REC 24-001), Salisbury**

Michael Margulis's Reconnaissance Permit (REC 24-001) for his Salisbury site was up for renewal. Mr. Margulis had submitted a request to the Board's staff asking the Board to consider granting him an extension of his permit's expiration date until the Board's next regularly-scheduled public meeting. In circumstances such as this, it has been the Board's practice to grant up to two extensions of a permit's expiration date within a given permit year. This would be this permit's first extension. Mr. Margulis was in attendance to represent this permit. Mr. Margulis reported that he had been active at the site in 2024 and anticipated making lots of discoveries in the coming year, if granted an extension at this meeting and a renewal at the Board's next public meeting. Mr. Margulis also reported that he had found a lot of information using government-issued and private company-produced satellite imagery of the permit area, which he thought would be of interest to the Board. There was no further discussion.

Graham McKay moved to grant Michael Margulis an extension of his Reconnaissance Permit (24-001) for his Salisbury site, with all standard conditions in effect, including the additional conditions that Mr. Margulis must:

- 1) coordinate any on-site activities with the DCR facility (Salisbury Beach State Reservation) staff and allow the DCR facility staff determine when his on-site activities take place;
- 2) coordinate with Jonathan Patton (DCR State Parks Archaeologist);
- 3) not conduct any excavation activities under this permit; and
- 4) remove no cultural materials from the boundaries of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts without the prior written approval of the Board's staff.

The duration of this permit extension shall be until the next public meeting of the Board, currently scheduled for May 29, 2025. Daniel Sampson seconded. Unanimous by a roll-call vote. So voted.

**6. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Stephen Pietruska, Isolated Find Exemption Request (2025-IFE-001)**

On March 18, 2025, the Board received an Isolated Find Exemption application from commercial fisherman, Stephen Pietruska, requesting the transfer of title from BUAR to him of an undated (circa-1900s)

compass-less bronze binnacle. The binnacle was encountered as an isolated find when Mr. Pietruska discovered it in his fishing net after bottom-trawling the seabed between Aquinnah on Martha's Vineyard Island and Nomans Land island (Chilmark) sometime in 1995 (approximately 30 years ago).

The Board's staff became aware of the find on February 22, 2025 when Mr. Pietruska contacted BUAR via email to report the discovery and ask for assistance researching its history and origin. The Board's staff replied to Mr. Pietruska via email on February 24, 2025 and explained that under MGLs Ch 6 § 180 and Ch 91 § 63, artifacts recovered from the state's submerged land are state property, and that it is a violation of state law to surface-collect or excavate without having proper authorization. The only exceptions are for surface collection of Isolated Finds and at Exempted Sites. However, to comply with state laws, anyone who collects an Isolated Find must report these recoveries to the Board via the Isolated Find Exemption Form and apply for the Isolated Find Exemption.

The Board's staff met with Mr. Pietruska at a family residence in Fairhaven on March 18, 2025 to: 1) inspect, photograph, and assess the conservation needs of the binnacle; 2) to examine on-line charting with Mr. Pietruska to obtain a better understanding of where he was trawling when the binnacle was encountered; 3) to discuss Mr. Pietruska's plans for the binnacle, and; 4) to assist him in completing the Isolated Find Exemption form for the find. Upon examining an online chart with the Board's staff, Mr. Pietruska recalled that he had been trawling in the general vicinity of charted wreckage north of Nomans Land island when the binnacle was recovered in his net. Except for its missing compass, and despite not having undergone any conservation treatment, the Board's staff found the binnacle to be in an excellent and stable condition with minimal superficial cupreous corrosion and salt staining in a few areas on its surface. The Board's staff took scale photographs of the binnacle, which had been stored lying on its side on a carpet on a dry basement floor. Mr. Pietruska discussed the possibility of donating the binnacle to a local museum and, again, asked for BUAR's assistance in researching its history and potential origin. The Board's staff commented to Mr. Pietruska that his idea of donating the find to a local museum would be the optimal disposition for it and in the public's best interest. The Board's staff also confirmed that it would assist Mr. Pietruska in trying to determine the age and origin of the binnacle. Two obvious clues for determining the age and origin of the binnacle were the manufacturer's names inscribed into the top of the binnacle: "LIDGERWOOD MFG. CO., ELIZABETH, N.J.," and "MFG. BY DUTCHESS TOOL CO., INC., BEACON, N.Y."

Preliminary online research on the Lidgerwood company by BUAR staff found a 2019 article by Gregory O'Connell, entitled, "*Red Hook's Lidgerwood Complex and the Importance of Our Industrial History*," which provided a concise history of the Lidgerwood Manufacturing Company. A September 1930 issue of *Compressed Air Magazine* with an advertisement that read: "*Lidgerwood Manufacturing Company, Elizabeth, New Jersey, Hoist and Derrick Headquarters for 57 years*" was also found during BUAR's preliminary research effort.

The Lidgerwood Manufacturing Company was founded by John H. Lidgerwood in 1873, when he reorganized its predecessor, Speedwell Ironworks, which had been founded in 1804 and was owned by Lidgerwood's father-in-law and sons before Lidgerwood bought it from them. Speedwell was famous for building some of the earliest steam engines for ships, the first successful steam locomotive built in America, parts for the first electric telegraph machine, and the machinery for *Savannah*, the first steamship to cross the Atlantic. The Lidgerwood Manufacturing Company specialized in making heavy lifting machinery and had facilities in Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and Portland. "Lidgerwood" became a generic name for rapid loading cable systems throughout the logging, shipping, and excavating worlds. The Lidgerwood name was on pile-drivers, mining equipment, and on heavy-duty hoists in harbors everywhere. In 1944, Lidgerwood Manufacturing relocated to Elizabeth, NJ. In 1947, Lidgerwood Manufacturing purchased the WI-based Superior Ironworks and the two merged companies became the J.S. Mundy Hoisting Engine Company and Superior-Lidgerwood-Mundy. All manufacturing moved to WI in the 1950s, and, today (i.e., 2019), Superior-Lidgerwood-Mundy remains one of the largest manufacturers of marine winches and heavy lifting equipment.

In a subsequent email exchange following the Board's staff's inspection of the Isolated Find, the Board's staff informed Mr. Pietruska that after consulting its files and communicating with citizen scientists, Mark

Munro and John Stanford, and marine surveyor, John Fish, the charted wreckage Mr. Pietruska recalled fishing in the general vicinity of around the time that the binnacle was encountered is the BUAR "Exempted Site" of the former "Yard Seaplane Derrick" (YSD-56). YSD-56 was a class of large, self-propelled, floating cranes that were used to recover seaplanes and other heavy objects from the water, typically at naval air stations. YSD-56 displaced 220/270 tons, and was 104'L-x-31'W-x-4'D. YSD-56 was built by the American Boiler Works in Erie, PA in 1943. It foundered in a storm off Nomans Land island in December of 1957, and was partially raised several weeks later, but foundered again, immediately thereafter.

Shipwrecks are given Exempted Site status by the Board for a variety of reasons, including (but not limited to): 1) it is a commonly known location; 2) it has been salvaged previously; 3) for its recreational value; 4) for its educational value; or 5) for its lack of significant archaeological or historical value. Recreational diving activities on these sites, including casual artifact collection, do not require a BUAR permit. However, any major disruption of the site is prohibited. The intent of creating an exempted shipwreck site is to preserve such sites for the continued enjoyment of the recreational diving community, who is encouraged to protect these sites for the continued enjoyment of all.

Dave R and the Board discussed several factors and questions regarding the nature of the find and possible repositories for its long-term curation in the event Mr. Pietruska decided to donate it to a museum for public display. This discussion resulted in the Board concluding that while circumstantial evidence suggested that the binnacle could have come from the BUAR Exempted Site, YSD-56, its discovery in the general vicinity of the wreck, rather than on or in close proximity to its charted location, and its isolated nature (i.e., a single unassociated artifact with no other shipwreck-related cultural materials recovered in the trawl with the binnacle) met the definition of an Isolated Find in the Board's Regulations (312 CMR 2.04). Board Member, Jonathan Patton, suggested the Martha's Vineyard Museum in Tisbury, or the Lidgerwood company's headquarters, as possible repositories for the binnacle should Mr. Pietruska decide to donate it in the future. Mr. Pietruska was not in attendance to represent this Isolated Find Exemption request due to a work commitment. There was no further discussion.

Daniel Sampson moved to grant Stephen Pietruska Isolated Find Exemption Request (2025-IFE-001) and waive the Board's jurisdiction over Isolated Find 2025-IFE-001, a bronze binnacle, recovered in state waters between Aquinnah and Nomans Land Island in Chilmark, and relinquish all rights, title and interest to the isolated find to Stephen Pietruska. John Warner seconded. Unanimous in favor by a roll-call vote. So voted.

Dave R thanked the Board, its permittees, and members of the public who attended the meeting, and reminded everyone that the next regularly-scheduled public meeting of the Board will be at **12:30 pm on Thursday, May 29, 2025**. This meeting will also be held in a hybrid format and accessible both remotely and as an in-person meeting in CZM/BUAR's offices on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor at 100 Cambridge Street in Boston. Instructions for accessing the meeting remotely or in-person will be posted prior to the meeting on the Board's Public Meetings Information webpage (<https://www.mass.gov/service-details/buar-public-meeting-information>). Permittees and interested members of the public are encouraged to monitor the BUAR webpage's Public Meetings Information section for other updates, meeting agendas, and meeting minutes.

Graham McKay moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:38 PM. Daniel Sampson seconded. Unanimous in favor by a roll-call vote. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,  
David S. Robinson  
Director