

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
BOARD OF UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING – 30 MARCH 2006**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Marcie Bilinski (Dive Community Representative)
Kathleen Dolan (Designee of James Hanlon, Director of Environmental Law Enforcement)
Terry French (Designee of John Warner, State Archivist)
John Hoagland (Dive Community Representative)
Lenny Loparto (Designee of Brona Simon, State Archaeologist)
Kevin Mooney (Designee of Mike Misslin, Director of DCR Division of Waterways)
Joe Pelczarski (Designee of Susan Snow-Cotter, Director of Coastal Zone Management)
Victor Mastone, Director (Staff for the Board)
David Trubey, Deputy Director (Staff for the Board)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ed Bell (Designee of Brona Simon, Acting Executive Director of the Massachusetts Historical Commission)
Brendan Foley (Marine Archaeologist)

PROCEEDINGS:

The public meeting of the Massachusetts Board of Underwater Archaeological Resources was convened by the Director, Victor Mastone, at 1:36 PM on 30 March 2006 in the CZM Conference Room at 251 Causeway Street, Boston.

1. MINUTES

A. Minutes of 2 December 2005

Victor asked the Board if there were any comments or corrections to the minutes of the public meeting held on 26 January 2006. There were no comments or corrections to the minutes.

John Hoagland moved to accept the minutes of the public meeting held on 26 January 2006. Kevin Mooney seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

2. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. Craigville Beach Shipwreck

Victor reported that he and David Trubey continued the documentation and preliminary evaluation of the possible shipwreck remains on Craigville Beach in Centerville. The wood debris was reported to the Board in late December and he and David visited the site on 4 January. Victor continued researching whether or not any shipwrecks occurred in that area or whether these remains represented a shipwreck. Historic literature and local accounts suggested a derelict vessel drifted to the location in the early 20th century. Barnstable records indicate that the derelict was dynamited and removed in the 1930s. Vic said he still needed to interview several people who recalled the wreck from their youth. On 8 March, he, David Trubey, and David Robinson of PAL conducted a more intensive examination and documentation of the wood debris. They were able to identify some of the remains as distinct ship's components. These included sections of frames, hull planking, ceiling, and possible deadwood. For example, the 30 foot structural component on the parking lot nearest the bathhouse is most likely the shelf clamp which is used to support the deck beams. They also took several wood samples to help with identification. However, many of these materials are heavily degraded and/or a somewhat random collection of vessel structural components rather than a distinct section of the ship. He noted there was an absence of diagnostic structural members and the remains in the parking lot appear to lack significant archaeological integrity.

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Victor said he had informed the Town of his preliminary findings and that he saw no need to further examine the wooden remains currently resting in that parking lot. He granted the town permission to move and/or dispose of those materials except for two pieces which he might want to further examine at a later date.

Victor and David plan to return to the site to inspect and document the one section still buried in the beach. It is hoped it might lend clues as to vessel type. The town would like to remove these remains as they pose a potential safety hazard. Victor noted that the town was very cooperative and helpful during this process.

B. Boston Maritime History Committee

Victor reported that he became member of the Boston Maritime History Committee. This informal organization has been around for a number of years and was instrumental in creating Boston's maritime history trails. He attended a "brainstorming" meeting on 2 March. He stated that it was quite encouraging to see such a diverse group of people interested in maritime heritage.

3. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

There were no Board member reports.

4. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS: OUTREACH

A. RAN Middle School, Newburyport

Victor reported that he participated in the Career Lunch Series of the RAN Middle School in Newburyport. He discussed the field of underwater archaeology as a profession for two classes comprising approximately 40 students. His participation in the event was requested by a visitor to the Board's Archaeology Month event last October.

B. Bay State Council of Divers

Victor reported that he attended the Bay State Council of Divers meeting on 8 February. The meeting focused mainly on the continuing plan to create an artificial reef and the upcoming meeting with the staff of the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary and the proposed diving limitations.

C. Boston Sea Rovers Annual Underwater Clinic

Victor informed the Board that he and David attended the Boston Sea Rovers 52nd Annual Underwater Clinic on March 4th – 5th at the Fairmont Copley Hotel in Boston. As it has in past years, the Board distributed literature at the Department of Marine Fisheries booth. Victor stated that he attended on Saturday and spent a lot of his time speaking with the various dive clubs that were represented. David attended on Sunday's session and caught some of the papers.

5. OLD BUSINESS

A. Bassings Cove Maritime Association

Victor reminded the Board that Bassings Cove Maritime Association (BCMA) had submitted an Excavation Permit renewal application and Annual Report in accordance with the Board's regulations but was unable to meet the deadline for consideration at the last meeting on 26 January. Tom Mulloy, Henry Lynch and Debra Jackson of BCMA were in attendance at that meeting and presented the organization's work for the year and plans for the 2006 season. Henry Lynch was in attendance today.

Mr. Lynch stated that in addition to the information presented by BCMA at the last meeting, the organization is working with the Norwell Natural Science Center to create an educational program for adults on the *Forest Queen* project. BCMA is also preparing a power point presentation for the Town of Scituate that will illustrate BCMA's work as it hopes to

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renew its agreement with the town for use of the laboratory building. Mr. Lynch added that although BCMA divers have not been on the *Forest Queen* site recently, some of the concretions were visible from the shore last week.

Kevin Mooney moved to renew, retroactive to 26 January 2006, the Excavation Permit (91-001) held by Bassings Cove Maritime Association for its Scituate site with all standard conditions remaining in effect and the additional condition that the permittee submit for Board approval a site assessment and detailed scope of work prepared by the project archaeologist prior to undertaking any site excavation activities relative to the removal of the main conglomerate. Marcie Bilinski seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

B. Restoration Project, Inc.

Victor reported that Restoration Project, Inc. (RPI) had submitted its Reconnaissance Permit renewal application and Annual Report in accordance with the Board's regulations, however, it was unable to meet the Board's 30 – day deadline. RPI is requesting an extension of its permit until the Board's next meeting scheduled for 25 May 2006. Eloise Newell, Director of RPI, was in attendance to present the organization's application.

Ms. Newell summarized RPI's underwater search for Babe Ruth's piano to date and detailed new information indicating that a piano was burned and buried on the property adjacent to which the underwater search has been conducted. Ms. Newell stated that the possibility this piano is the Babe Ruth piano needs to be investigated before the underwater search resumes. It is RPI's hope that it can recover the buried piano and use the serial number on the manufacturer's plate to date it. If the date proves to be later than 1918, RPI will resume the underwater search and will procure an additional magnetometer survey. She indicated that RPI does have a potential funding source to continue the search.

John Hoagland asked Ms. Newell if RPI has obtained permission from the property owner to dig for the piano. Ms. Newell replied that it has not, but that she is confident that an agreement can be reached. She noted that RPI could provide landscaping for the site following any excavation and that she and the landowner have a very good rapport.

Ms. Newell stated that she does not believe that the piano reportedly buried on the property is the so called Babe Ruth piano, as this new scenario contradicts the oral history. If the piano was in fact placed on the frozen Pond, she feels the steeply graded shoreline would have made it nearly impossible to push it back up. Now that the Red Sox have finally won a World Series and the "Curse of the Bambino" has been broken, Ms. Newell stated that she is often asked why RPI is continuing with its search. She explained that due to the intense media coverage of the 2004 season, it was very difficult for RPI to effectively convey its anti-stigma message. The need for this message is just as strong now and the piano could serve as a center piece for RPI's campaign. She added that RPI can make its point better now without the distractions of the 2004 season. Victor noted that any onshore excavation on private property would not fall under the Board's jurisdiction.

Kathy Dolan moved to extend the Reconnaissance Permit (02-001) held by Restoration Project, Inc. for its Willis Pond site until the Board's next meeting scheduled for 25 May 2006. Kevin Mooney seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

C. Underwater Discoveries Unlimited

Victor reported that Underwater Discoveries Unlimited (UDU) had submitted its permit renewal application and Annual Report in accordance with the Board's Regulations. Victor informed the Board, the UDU would like to renew its Excavation Permit (96-001) as a reconnaissance permit and modify its current Reconnaissance Permit (05-001) to excavation. Victor stated that UDU had submitted a considerable amount of information that was required by the Board as conditions to the current reconnaissance permit and this information was included in the packet for today's meeting. Oscar Snow was in attendance to present the application on behalf of UDU.

Mr. Snow reported the reason for UDU's permit modification request is to facilitate the proposed work at the *White Squall* site and ultimately use the proceeds from the salvaged tin to fund UDU's original project. He noted that he was involved in the early stages of the *White Squall* salvage, but left the project because he did not approve of the manner in which it was being managed. He views UDU's proposed *White Squall* salvage as an opportunity to make sure the job is completed in a professional manner. He stated that all of the information on both projects has been submitted per the Board's request.

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Victor explained that what UDU is essentially requesting is to take the methodology it was going to use on its northern site and transfer it to its southern site. He stated that the Board has already approved the methodology. The question then becomes, is the Board willing to grant a change of permit status at the time of renewal? He noted that the Board has renewed an excavation permit as reconnaissance in the past, but he did not recall the Board ever renewing a reconnaissance permit as an excavation permit. However, the Board has modified a reconnaissance permit to excavation in the past. In fact, this was the case with one of the earlier *White Squall* permits several years ago. Mr. Snow added that the permit held by Old Blue was similarly modified in the past. Victor stated that, given the Board's regulatory constraints, UDU's request is appropriate. Oscar reminded the Board that if UDU encounters any artifacts during the course of the White Squall project, they will be recovered in an archaeological manner by the project archaeologist and in accordance with the work plan.

Lenny Loparto asked Mr. Snow for clarification as to the context of the tin. He stated that it is still not clear if the tin is exposed. Mr. Snow replied that the tin blocks are interlocked and at different times are covered with sand. He added that when the divers visit the site this season, UDU will report the current site conditions. If the site is covered with sand, UDU has the capability to remove it. Victor stated that he understands Lenny's concern as to the recovery of the tin and emphasized that the material, although a considered a commodity, is also cultural and needs to be treated as such. UDU will need to conduct the recovery of the tin as well as the documentation of the site, to archaeological standards. He added that the Board's interest in the project is primarily the documentation of the vessel's structure and noted that the vessel's integrity may have changed dramatically since Ocean Marine Diving Company (OMDC) was on site. Mr. Snow replied that the vessel is in three pieces and the site is a mess. Lenny stated that if the site is in such a disarticulated stated as UDU has reported, it seems more likely that UDU will encounter artifacts other than the tin during the recovery process. Mr. Snow replied that from the research UDU conducted, it appears that most of the non tin artifacts associated with the vessel were either recovered by OMDC or were washed away by currents and storm activity. He added that the vessel's deck, fittings, gear, etc. are gone and that the tin is essentially all that remains due to its weight and the fact that it is interlocked. Victor stated that OMDC did recover some thirty artifacts which are now in the Board's possession. He noted that based on limited photographic documentation, it appears that these artifacts were primarily recovered from the stern quarter and that the rest of the vessel was nothing but open framing. Victor stated that the UDU will have to demonstrate that the vessel lacks archaeological integrity and Mr. Snow needs to recognize that one of UDU's risks in this project is that it might have to recover and conserve coincidental artifacts. Victor added that he believes Mr. Snow does recognize this risk and that UDU is prepared to deal with it. He added that the project archaeologist needs to be on site during the recovery operation and suggested that the Board add this condition to any motion. Mr. Snow acknowledged this risk and that UDU is prepared to handle coincidental artifacts in an appropriate archeological manner in accordance with the organization's work plan.

Kevin Mooney asked if the Board is simply taking the work plan from UDU's northern site and applying it to the southern site. Victor replied that this is essentially what the Board needs to decide. Kevin asked the Board if it might be advisable to have UDU's project archaeologist prepare some type of written statement indicating that the northern site work plan is appropriate for the southern site. Victor agreed with Kevin that such a statement would be beneficial. Mr. Snow stated that UDU can obtain this statement, but the Board will have to wait until his project archaeologist returns from overseas. John Hoagland suggested that this requirement also be a condition of any motion.

Joe Pelczarski reminded Mr. Snow that he should update the Wellfleet Conservation Commission of any changes to UDU's permits. Mr. Snow acknowledged Joe's request and stated that he communicates with the Town regularly.

Marcie Bilinski moved to renew permit No. 96-001 held by Underwater Discoveries Unlimited for its Wellfleet site as a reconnaissance permit with all standard conditions in effect and with the further condition that the permittee coordinate all field activities with the staff of the Cape Cod National Seashore. John Hoagland seconded. 6 votes in favor, 1 opposed (Kevin Mooney). So voted.

Kevin Mooney moved to modify the status of permit No. 05-001 held by Underwater Discoveries Unlimited for its Wellfleet (*White Squall* site) from reconnaissance to excavation with all standard conditions in effect and with the further conditions that the project archaeologist affirm (in writing) that the previously devised excavation/recovery methodology is appropriate for this site and that this affirmation be submitted to the Board prior to any excavation activity, that all excavation activities be conducted under the direct supervision of the project archaeologist and in accordance with the submitted work plan, and that UDU coordinates all field activities with the staff of the Cape Cod National Seashore. Joe Pelczarski seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

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D. James Karos

Victor reported that Mr. James Karos requested a moment of the Board's time to provide an update on his work at the Chelsea Creek site. Mr. Karos was in attendance to present this update.

Mr. Karos provided Board members with a preliminary photo mosaic of the site. He explained that the process of getting the photos to line up one with another is very difficult and time consuming as every time the camera is moved, it throws off the angles. He noted that the image he presented to the Board is comprised of approximately 60 photos. He has purchased a computer program that will make the process easier, but his computer does not have sufficient memory at this time. Mr. Karos reported that he visited the Essex Shipbuilding Museum and learned that the Essex yard utilized a lot of black locust in the manufacturing of treenails. He is hoping to find if this practice is unique to New England or more widespread. He would eventually like to have a treenail from his site analyzed, but not until he has completed the mapping process. He added that the curator of MIT's Hart Nautical Collection told him that based on its dimensions, the Chelsea Creek wreck likely represents a two-masted schooner.

Victor asked Mr. Karos if he could take a photograph of his camera apparatus so that the Board can get a better idea of the process. Mr. Karos noted that he tried different designs including one made of 2 x 4s and resembling a giant police barricade. This structure proved to be too heavy to move. His latest design resembles an oversized step ladder with outriggers that prevent it from tipping over. The structure allows him to take photographs from about 15 feet above the wreck. He added that a lot of the work is based on trial and error but he is making progress.

John Hoagland asked Mr. Karos what method he is using to map the site. Mr. Karos replied that he would like to try several methods of mapping including trilateration, triangulation, grid, and distance and bearing. He stated that he is learning a lot through the project and enjoying the work. He added that the Essex Shipbuilding Museum is a great resource.

6. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

Lenny Loparto moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:23 PM. Kathleen Dolan seconded. Unanimous vote in favor. So voted.

Respectfully submitted,

Victor T. Mastone
Director