

**MONITOR NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
Sanctuary Advisory Council Meeting – Conference Call**

MEETING MINUTES

March 19, 2020

2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Meeting Location: N/A (Call-In)

Conference call in: 1-866-873-2206, Passcode: 4282677#

Meeting Objectives: (1) Reports and Updates

Attendance: (see attached attendance roster)

8 community seats present (of 13 filled seats)

5 government seats present (of 8 filled seats (not including alternates))

5 sanctuary staff members present (of 7 staff)

Meeting Notes

Administrative Business and Announcements

★ Chair's Welcome

Joe Poe welcomed everyone and explained that he was filling in for Jim Tobin who is unable to return from Chile at this time and is being quarantined until further notice. He expressed that he hoped all were doing well and understands that times are different as we all try to work from home and not in our normal routines and spaces.

★ Approval of Draft Minutes from previous meeting (12/13/2019)

Nathan Richards made the motion to approve the minutes and Debby Boyce seconded the motion. A roll call of those in attendance was taken and all answered yes in approval of the December 13, 2019 minutes.

★ Brief Council Member Update

None.

Public Comment Period

None.

Reports

★ Superintendent's Update

Dave Alberg welcomed everyone and expressed his thanks for everyone taking the time to join the call. He expressed his regrets about not being able to have this meeting at ECU, but said that we would look forward to rescheduling a meeting there soon. Dave explained that all of the MNMS staff are teleworking along with most other government agencies and businesses, but he reassured the SAC that the sanctuary is operational and up and running. He said that The Mariners' Museum (TMM) is also closed to the public and most of their staff are teleworking, but they are doing great things with online learning. He speculated that the current situation may last longer than shorter and that we will continue to be as flexible as possible.

Dave told the group that last Friday (March 13) President Trump signed into the law the bill that grants World War II Merchant Mariners a Congressional Gold Medal, the highest honor for civilians. Each veteran can receive it after they or their families show they are eligible.

Dave also said that as of Tuesday (March 15), a Federal Register Notice went out that repeals NMFS regulations of no fishing within MNMS. During the commenting period, only four comments were received—two very positive comments from the state of NC and two from citizens (one for and one against). This repeal finally cleans up the old language and shows that MNMS is open for fishing. Rom Whitaker said he was glad that it went through and it will help to get fishermen on board with expansion, with Ernie Foster agreeing.

Dave continued with budget news and said that MNMS's budget stayed flat with a slight increase. We will maintain TMM support at \$250,000 and that he is working with the museum on a new 5-year agreement to continue to secure funds.

For expansion efforts, Dave said that the Notice of Proposed Rule is now at OMB and with federal partners. Next it will be released for public comment and that process will run for 90 days. The draft proposal might be released in June. Then we will hold public meetings and the public will comment. Then NOAA goes back and makes any changes that need to be addressed from the public comments. The process is moving forward with only a few points to be worked out.

★ Field Work Update

Tane Casserley talked about the upcoming summer field work to happen in August aboard the NOAA Ship *Nancy Foster*. The expedition is a telepresence project that will highlight North Carolina shipwrecks. He is working with the Global Foundation for Ocean Exploration (GFOE), who are very experienced at telepresence. The expedition will run about 8 to 10 hours each day and the video feed will be free to anyone interested and can be viewed through an online website. The event will also be shared at various national venues, such as the WWII Museum and two venues on Ford Island (Hawaii), which will offer a unique look

at the war from two opposite ends of the U.S. We are also working with TMM and NC Maritime Museums and Aquariums. Tane also said that he will reconnect with the Navy to talk about how they can be involved. Rom Whitaker asked if this will only be local. Tane explained that it is free for everyone on the internet and that anyone can interact from their home or office at their leisure. Dave Alberg explained that we will also broadcast on giant screens at high profile venues.

Tane continued explaining that he and Chris Southerly, along with Dr. Chris Taylor, will be on the ship. This combination of researchers will give a perspective from a historical standpoint, and it will also show the wrecks' value to the local blue economy with their vibrant marine life. Andre Nabors asked if there was going to be a press release, to which Tane said yes, and that he will get it out to the SAC before it is released.

Tane continued to talk about the series of meetings that he and Dave Alberg held with the NC state offices of cultural resources. They met in Newport News and talked about ways to partner in telling our collective landscape stories off NC. A series of talks will take maritime stories from the mountains to the sea. Talks have been scheduled but may need to be rescheduled due to Covid-19, but some of the current venues are in Asheville and Raleigh. The state of NC is doing "Submerged NC" for the entire year to highlight wrecks in lakes, rivers, and sea. Tane said they are also talking with the governor to find other ways to celebrate the end of World War II, 75 years ago. Rom Whitaker said that it sounds wonderful, and that he is happy to help anyway he and others that he knows can. Tane explained that most sites for the August expedition are deep water sites, but thanked him for his offer of help as he knows they are challenging places. Chris Southerly said that his office is also looking at other venues such as the Museum of the Albemarle and the three North Carolina aquariums.

★ Conservation Update

Will Hoffman said that the museum is currently closed to the public and most staff are teleworking, thus limiting the conservation work plan. He said that staff are taking turns going in on a daily basis to make sure everything is OK. Will said that before the shutdown, they were able to complete the cleaning and boring of both *Monitor* guns. A specially designed horizontal boring machine removed the marine growth from down the barrel of both guns. The guns are back in their tanks and this was the last major hurdle in the conservation of the guns.

There was a lot of great press coverage of the boring of the guns, which helped to share the story of this great iron clad ship. Dave Alberg commented that the boring of the guns was one of the top 5 milestones in conservation. He said that the media attention is a good reminder of how the story of *Monitor* still resonates with people and that it has never faded from public interest. He also said "hats off" to the conservation team. Dave shared that there was also great coverage by the Washington Post.

Meeting Close-Out

★ New Business

None.

★ Next Council Event/Meeting

Next SAC meeting will be June 11, 2020 at MNMS offices. For now, Dave Alberg said to stick with the date and worst-case scenario it will be another conference call.

Adjourn

Debby Boyce motioned to adjourn the meeting and Nathan Richards seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

Meeting Close-Out	
<u>Actions to Take:</u>	
✓ Fill remaining vacant SAC seats for governmental positions.	

Attendance Roster:

Community Members		
Jim Tobin	Citizen-at-Large	Absent
Kim Kenyon	Conservation	Present
Karen Brown	Economic Development	Absent
David Sybert	Education	Absent
Andre Nabors	Heritage Tourism	Present
Nathan Richards	Maritime Archaeological Research	Present
Ernie Foster	Recreational/Commercial Fishing	Present
Rom Whitaker	Recreational/Commercial Fishing	Present
Matt Landrum	Recreational Diving	Absent
Joe Poe	Recreational Diving	Present
Debby Boyce	Ocean Sports	Present
Will Hoffman	The Mariners' Museum	Present
OPEN	The Mariners' Museum (Alt)	-----
Jenna Hartley	Student Seat (Non-Voting)	Absent
Government Members		
Dave Hallac	NPS (Primary)	Present
OPEN	NPS (Alternate)	-----
Chris Southerly	NC DCR (Primary)	Present
OPEN	NC DCR (Alternate)	-----
Jason Peters	NC Dept. Environmental Quality	Absent
Steve Poland	NC Dept. Environmental Quality (Alt)	Present

Everette Newton	NC Local Gov't – Town of Beaufort	Absent
OPEN	NC Local Gov't – Town of Beaufort (Alt)	-----
Bobby Outten	NC Local Gov't – Dare County	Absent
Drew Pearson	NC Local Gov't – Dare county (Alt)	Absent
LCDR David Stutt	US Coast Guard	Absent
Kate Moore	US Coast Guard (Alt)	Absent
Robert Neyland	US Navy	Present
Alexis Catsambis	US Navy (Alt)	Present
Samantha Henderson	VA DHR	Present
Greg LaBudde	VA DHR (Alt)	Absent
Sanctuary Staff		
David Alberg	Sanctuary Superintendent	Present
Paul Ticco	Northeast Regional Coordinator	Present
Tane Casserley	Permit Coordinator	Present
Will Sassorossi	Research Coordinator	Present
David Dodsworth	IT Coordinator	Absent
Shannon Ricles	Education/Outreach Coordinator	Present
Sean Cimilluca	NOAA Corp Officer	Absent
Others/Public		