

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

**MEETING MINUTES**

June 11, 2020

2:00 pm to 3:00 pm

Meeting Location: N/A (Virtual – Google Meets)

Conference call in: 1 267-483-9870 PIN: 348 494 518#

**Meeting Objectives:** (1) Reports and Updates, (2) Volunteer of the Year Award Announcement

**Attendance:** (see attached attendance roster)

9 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 make the call. He was happy to see people's faces that were able to connect in.

★ Approval of Draft Minutes from previous meeting (3/19/2020)

Joe Poe made the motion to approve the minutes during roll call. Kim Kenyon made motion to do so, Chris Southerly seconded the motion. A roll call of those in attendance was taken and all answered yes in approval of the March 19, 2020 minutes.

★ Brief Council Member Update

Joe Poe gave a personal update on a case he presented to the Supreme Court and commented that it was an experience like none other. The case involved a copyright matter with QAR. Joe also expressed that he hopes we get back to a regular meeting soon. Next, he asked if anyone had any announcements they wanted to make--either concerning the sanctuary or otherwise.

Jenna Hartley is working with Duke University Marine Lab and next week starts their 3rd annual marine debris workshop. It will be held virtually, and she would appreciate everyone spreading the word to any 4th and 5th grade teachers they might know.

### **Public Comment Period**

None.

### **Reports**

#### ★ Superintendent's Update

Dave Alberg welcomed everyone and said it is definitely a strange time and that he hoped we will be back to face-to-face meetings soon. He gave an update on the Federal office saying it closed mid-March and the staff went into week one of telework mode. Soon teleworking became mandatory so we have all been working remotely. He indicated that a time period for lifting restrictions is still up in the air, but the Dept. of Commerce is starting to lift teleworking from mandatory to highly recommended. Only those who are mission critical will be going into the offices. He thinks that perhaps the next SAC meeting, maybe even the next two, will be virtual. He said that whether or not we hold face-to-face meetings will be based on the state governors and local policies. Dave said that The Mariners' Museum's Noland Trail is opening up next Monday, but the museum is remaining closed until August.

Dave said that during the last SAC meeting, he sent up the draft proposal of rulemaking, and that comments were received from other federal agencies. Draft documents will then be sent back out to federal partners for another review and then OIRA (Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs). Dave also said that it is likely with North Carolina's and Virginia's COVID-19 guidelines, any meeting we hold on expansion will most likely be virtual. Currently Flower Garden Banks NMS and Stellwagen NMS have both held public meetings virtually and the feedback has been positive, with people saying that it makes it easier to attend and offers it to broader audience. Dave said that current guidelines will make public meetings difficult, so he is preparing for virtual meetings. He stated that the changes made do not really change anything that was shared with the SAC. There were some boundary changes, but the story remains the same and regulations stay the same. He thanked Debby Boyce for bringing forward the issues with fossil resources and that they have been cleared up in the documents.

#### ★ Field Work Update

Will Sassorossi said that there were a number of things planned for this year, but everything has been completely canceled for 2020. He said that they were going to work with BAREG (Battle of the Atlantic Research and Expedition Group), a group of avocational divers who they have worked with in the past. Generally, the work is done in the early spring, and this year the target was the merchant ship, Atlas. However, due to COVID-19, the trip was cancelled, but it will be on the docket for next year. Will explained that the other big research cruise for this year was a new partnership with Duke University Marine Lab using their boat,

RV Shearwater. He said they were going to tag up with Duke for a 5-day ops to work in the preferred expanded boundary area, and that some targets had never been hit before. Will said that some of the targets were not a part of the Battle of the Atlantic story, but still historical resources that were not previously investigated by MNMS staff. That project has also been scrapped for this year but pushed forward. Will explained that there has been a significant roll back in diving protocol. Dave Alberg said he wanted to express that with the Duke partnership, MNMS is still securing the funding for next year. He said that although he will move the funding over, there won't be a hard date for expedition, but he will make sure that funding is there to support Duke and local community. He explained that with the Sand Tiger sold, that MNMS looks to the Duke boat as a platform for future work.

Tane Casserley said that we are working with the Global Foundation for Ocean Exploration (GFOE), which coming to work with the sanctuary through a large grant they received. GFOE is one of three groups awarded a grant. Last year, GFOE worked in Flower Garden Banks NMS, and MNMS made a pitch to tell our story. The expedition dates are fluid due white ship quarantine. It is unclear how the ships will come back online. It takes about 28 days to get back up and running. So if they come back up around July, then the expedition might start August 24 and run into September. Tane explained that we are excited as the expedition will look at Monitor, the Billy Mitchel ships, and several other prominent World War II shipwrecks. During the expedition, the ships will be scanned using multibeam sonar. Special cameras will be used to create 360° video tours of each ship. Ernie Foster asked if the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum was one of the partners included in the GFOE project. Tane said that yes, they are full partners. Tane also mentioned there is also a plan to connect to land through interactions with about 25 different museums across the country, including several North Carolina venues, such as the history and science museums in Raleigh, and the North Carolina Aquarium. The National World War II museum acts as a sponsor and there are also plans to connect to Pearl Harbor. Tane said that they are hoping it will happen in August, but if not, then maybe in early summer of 2021.

★ Volunteer of the Year Award

Will Sassorossi explained that every year, the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation (NMSF) requests that each site submit their Volunteer of the Year nominee. In the past Debby Boyce and Ernie Foster have been nominated. Generally, NMSF announces the winner of the award at Capitol Hill Ocean Week (CHOW). However, this year's CHOW was virtual and they haven't announced it yet. Letters go out tomorrow.

Will Hoffman said that The Mariners' Museum submitted a nominee, Arianna DiMucci, who has been a volunteer with The Marines' Museum for a few years. Arianna had worked with Queen Ann's Revenge, and came to the museum when her military husband was transferred to the local area. She is passionate about the work she does and is a great team player. She dedicated over 600 hours to support the conversation efforts. She also is dedicated in that she lives in Virginia Beach and commutes about two hours each time she volunteers. On her own, she volunteered to help with the gun boring project. Will said that they are very pleased to support her as MNMS's Volunteer of the Year. Dave Alberg expressed his gratitude and said that MNMS is honored to put her forward as our nominee.

★ Conservation Update

Will Hoffman started his update by stating The Mariners' Museum is still in shutdown mode, but conservation is still taking care of the artifacts. They are going in twice a week to maintain the chemistry. Treatment progress is moving forward, but in a holding pattern. The park (Noland Trail) is slated to open next week. The conservation team has a rough plan of what they want to accomplish, but it may change. Will assured everyone that all the artifacts are safe and that project treatment is going forward. Will also said that museum's website has an active blog, and that now with more time, they are constantly updating it with "behind the scenes," so check it out. Dave Alberg added that MNMS has finalized another five-year contract with the museum for the conservation of the artifacts insuring that partial funding will be from federal funds.

**Meeting Close-Out**

★ New Business

Dave Alberg also asked Ernie Foster to give an update on the flag pole project. Ernie Foster said that the flag pole is for the old Weather Station in Hatteras. He said that Lou Valance got serious about getting that flag pole back into place. He talked with Dave Hallac (NPS), and they are interested in having it replaced and they are looking at NOAA to help in the village. Ernie said that another fellow had moved one and they have both priced out everything. Ernie explained that it's a public relations tool and can inform the public, and it's a win-win for all. Will Sassorossi said that there have been several conversations with the parks department to generate a list of what needs to go where and how much money is needed. Ernie said that with all the people who are interested in this, it seems like a good project. Dave Alberg concurred and said that there is enough money in MNMS's budget to support it this year. Ernie said that the Community Hatteras Village Civic Association and the weather station in Newport, North Carolina, along with the local Coast Guard all go out of their way to help on their own time.

Joe Poe said that everything with the state government seems to be closed down. Chris Southerly replied that yes, everything with the government is on hold and that they are in the same situation as Dave and Tane talked about. Nothing is set in stone for the next few weeks, but the state will most likely go from "must telework" to "maximum teleworking". However, as a whole, they are approaching everything very cautiously. It is the same with opening up any state sites. Sites with outside areas, opened, but not enclosed venues like aquariums, and it will remain that way until the next phase.

Joe Poe commented that it is a different world these days and that even DEMA is shut down. New Orleans is out and the show will be back in Las Vegas the next year (2021).

Joe Poe announced that the next scheduled council meeting is slated for December 10, 2020 (Beaufort, NC). He asked if there was going to be another virtual meeting before then. Dave Alberg said for now he recommended that the SAC stick to the December date. However, in

the next 4-8 weeks, there will more of an idea of what's going on and he may call everyone together for expansion updates, and he will let them know if we will need to do virtual meetings. Dave also said that if there is a need, we can always add a meeting to the calendar.

Will Sassorossi told the council that Dave Sybert's position as the Education seat ends this month. He said that he will be sending out notice for another recruitment period, but not sure how it will go with the current situation. Will also said that there might be some additional seats opening up in the near future.

Joe Poe asked if the membership and bios on the website were up to date. Will said that they are and that the only new person is Karen Brown, the new Economic Development seat.

Joe Poe asked if there was anyone from the public that would like to make a comment. None. He then asked if there was any other new business. None.

★ Next Council Event/Meeting

Next SAC meeting will be December 10, 2020 in Beaufort, NC. For now, Dave Alberg said to stick with the date and worst-case scenario it will be another conference call.

**Adjourn**

Joe Poe called for a motion to adjourn. Ernie Foster made the motion to adjourn, and Chris Southerly seconded it. The meeting was adjourned.

**Meeting Close-Out**

Actions to Take:

- ✓ Fill remaining vacant SAC seats for governmental positions.

**Attendance Roster:**

<b>Community Members</b>		
Jim Tobin	Citizen-at-Large	Absent
Kim Kenyon	Conservation	Present
Karen Brown	Economic Development	Absent
David Sybert	Education	Present
Andre Nabors	Heritage Tourism	Present
Nathan Richards	Maritime Archaeological Research	Absent
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)	Present
<b>Government Members</b>		
Dave Hallac	NPS (Primary)	Absent
OPEN	NPS (Alternate)	-----
Chris Southerly	NC DCR (Primary)	Present
OPEN	NC DCR (Alternate)	-----
Jason Peters	NC Dept. Environmental Quality	Present
Steve Poland	NC Dept. Environmental Quality (Alt)	Absent
Everette Newton	NC Local Gov't – Town of Beaufort	Present
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	Present
Kate Moore	US Coast Guard (Alt)	Absent
Robert Neyland	US Navy	Absent
Alexis Catsambis	US Navy (Alt)	Present
Samantha Henderson	VA DHR	Absent
Greg LaBudde	VA DHR (Alt)	Absent
<b>Sanctuary Staff</b>		
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
<b>Others/Public</b>		