

**Thames River Heritage Park**

**Transition Team Meeting - Agenda**

**Wednesday, January 27, 2016, 8:30AM (0830)**

**Ft Trumbull State Park Conference Center**

**New London, Connecticut**

**Minutes**

Attending: Transition Team Members: Chris Cox (Chair), Pamela Adams (Secretary), Juliet Hodge, Kristin Clarke, Penny Parsekian, Brent Eugenides, Penny Newbury, Joe Selinger, Paige Bronk, Deborah Donovan

Guests: Judy Benson (The Day), Jeff Harris (N.L. Port Authority)

**I. Call to Order:** P. Parsekian called meeting to order @ 0845.

**II. THRP Chairman’s Report/Announcements**

Chris reported that Atlantic Broadband purchased Metrocast Cable, and

its new CEO, Chap Hanley has indicated a serious interest in our project and offered to

create video clips that could be shared with other cable stations. Chris and Penny visited

the studio, met the staff and were impressed with their in-house capabilities. They plan to video the March event

and produce a CD which can be used as a marketing tool.

Penny reported that seven (7) potential Operators attended the required pre-application meeting. They came from throughout the region. Great questions and a lot of enthusiasm and interest! Proposals are due mid- February

**III. Approval of Minutes December 9, 2015** – P. Adams

MM: Juliet Hodge – Approve Minutes as Presented

MS: Kristin Clarke

Vote: All in favor, no Nays, No abstentions

**IV. Fiduciary Report** – B. Eugenides for J. Butler

Brent Eugenides provided a report which was sent out to TT Members electronically.

Total Receipts: $45,500.00 ($30,000 City of Groton Town of Groton City of New London & $15,500 Water Taxi Demo)

Total Expenses: $12,002.60 ($5,990 Yacht Transport, $102.24 engine recommissioning, $250.00 Ad N.L. Landmarks,

$660.36 *The Day* & Mystic Country Ad)

Balance**: $33,497.40\***

\*Invoice from 2014 Taxi Demo project was never received from Cross Sound Ferry after a number of requests. TBD if it is a donation. Expenses would relate to Captain’s fees and Fuel.

Upcoming Expenses: Marine Survey on the two Water Taxis

**V. Committee Reports**

A. Organization Committee – Chair: Juliet Hodge (Report handed out at the meeting and subsequently emailed to TT)

1. Scope of Work

2. Office Space

Questions to be answered:

1. Identify purpose/intent of the office

* Executive Director’s Office
* 2nd Office for future staff or water Taxi Operator and/or Volunteer Coordinator
* Workspace/Reception Area/Visitor Information
* Meeting Room

2. Budget

3. Location

* Within the “park” (e.g. Along Thames Street, Downtown NL)
* At one of the “exhibit” sites (e.g. Fort Trumbull, Nautilus Museum, etc.)
* Within existing landmark (e.g. Train Station, Mother Bailey House, Avery Copp House etc.)

Options: (Least Expensive to Most Expensive)

1. Virtual Office for Director Off-site Meeting Space

2. Rent Office in existing co-working space

3. Lease private office space

-Pros & Cons of each Option were discussed and sent out in the report. Also prospective locations were listed and discussed.

-Cannot move forward on selecting a location until an Operator has been selected and a budget established.

-Possibly start operation with Option #1 then as the need arises, move to another option.

-Jeff Harris brought up the possibility of the Train Station Lobby (The upper levels of the building will not be ready for a while.) J. Harris suggested speaking with John Johnson.

- Also speak with Tony Sylvestri (Harbor Towers) for space. Juliet also suggested free space at 19 Thames Street in Groton

-Possibility of free space at N.L. Historical Society on Blinman Street

-Office phone # should be attached to a cell phone so questions can be answered in a timely and

customer-friendly fashion

-Office Space will be needed – possibly as early as May but no later than July 1, 2016

-Meeting space will be needed – potentially ask for free space.

-Suggestion to look at the initial space as temporary/transition space.

Other items to consider:

-Kiosk at Union Station or on City Pier

-Kiosk along Thames St. or at Water Taxi Launch Site

-Facilities for Volunteers or Water Taxi Operator

Timeline – Juliet reviewed current timeline with Committee. Adjustments were made to some tasks.

-Communications Plan will replace Marketing Plan as it is now part of Communications Plan

-Budget & Fundraising - To be done in February 2016

-Book keeping system to be set up in Feb/March

-Select Founding Board – To be done after By-Laws have been completed and accepted by TT.

-Standing Committee Positions will be established – sub-committee should meet to review structure

-501c3 Non-profit tax status needs to be filed.

-First meeting of new TRHP – June 2016

B. Governance Committee – Chair: Joe Selinger

1. Adopt Yale Report as the TRHP Strategic Plan

MM: J. Hodge – Adopt the Yale Report as the Thames River Heritage Park as the official Strategic Plan

MS: P. Parsekian

Vote: All in favor, no Nays, No abstentions

2. Review draft Certificate of Incorporation (COI)

-COI sets up the framework for corporation the rest of the details are filled through the By-laws.

-Incorporator Role – Files the initial documents and works on legal matters with the initial Board of Directors

-COI filed with the Secretary of the State’s Office - takes ~one week to finalize.

-Addresses will be filled in

-Budget – Initial budget needs to be completed for filings

-Tax Status needs to be re-filed

MM: D. Donovan – File the Certificate of Incorporation

MS: Chris Cox

Vote: All in favor, no Nays, No abstentions

3. Review draft By-Laws

-Executive Director should be an officer but not voting member of the Board.

TT suggested leaving Executive Director as Ex Officio member if he/she cannot vote

-Initial Board elected by the Transition Team?

-Clarification of voting/non-voting members

-A revised draft will be sent out. TT Committee Members to review and send comments to J. Selinger ASAP

-TT Committee shall adopt By-laws at the next Committee Meeting (February 24, 2016)

C. Finance Committee – Chair: Brent Eugenides

1. Operating & Capital Budgets

2. Spending Guidelines

a) Purchase additional copies of Yale report for sponsorship development ($34 + shipping) - Ten (10) copies needed for Sponsorships

b) Purchase additional copies of Appendix

($11) Ten (10) copies needed for Sponsorships

MM: P. Adams – Authorize the expenditure of up to $500 for the purchase and shipping of 10 copies of the Yale Report and Appendix

MS: D. Donovan

Vote: All in favor, no Nays, No abstentions

c) Other expenses

-Map of the TRHP to be designed. Will contain two small insets from the Nautilus (Submarine Force Museum) and Lighthouses

-Graphic Design work will be approx. $1,200

3. Fundraising Plan

Grants from Humanities Council & Community Foundation to help offset costs of map and March 31st meeting.

D. Communications & Programming Committee – Chair: Penny Parsekian

Penny shared a copy of the advertisement created by Graphic Designer Rita Rivera that will be placed in Mystic Country magazine. Kudos to Rita for an outstanding job. (See last page of Minutes)

• Stats on Social Media

Penny reported that the TRHP has 120 followers on Twitter and 60 followers on Facebook,

Twitter - 120 Followers

Facebook – 60 Followers, 4437 Page visits, 204 Likes, 293 Searches

She urged members to like the Facebook page and invite their friends to do the same. Chris Cox acknowledged the outstanding work of the Social Media folks (Penny Newbury and Leslie Olding) on the Blog, the beautifully done web page and Social Media sites.

* TRHP will hold an Event for the heritage sites within the park and the host towns on March 31 to bring all parties together and present information on the status of the park in an effort to build upon the enthusiasm for the park.

1. Date: March 31 from 6:30-8PM

2. Where: Garde Art Center Oasis Room

3. Audience/invitees: Penny P. explained that host municipalities, as well as the

heritage sites, were being included in this meeting because, like the sites, they

have jurisdiction over areas within the park.

4. Amenities: Cash bar & Free bagged popcorn or snacks, which will be very

expensive if the Garde provides. [Ellen has volunteered to provide.]

5. MC: Chris Cox

6. Welcome: Mayors of the three municipalities

7. Content: Alan Plattus to present benefits & opportunities of the park (Chris & Penny met with Alan and Andrei at Yale to review the focus and details of the meeting

***Action Item: Provide names to P. Parsekian of people who should be invited***

* Initiate/Foster Collaboration: community building - Meeting w/Sites

- Ellen Cummings has held conversations with Exec Directors of sites within the park

Ellen reported that she has had discussions with New London Landmarks and the New

London Maritime Society. She said people are supportive, but there is an element of

skepticism as to whether the park will be completed. She will continue reaching out,

especially to encourage staff and board members to attend March 31.

* Map & Guide – create, print, partnership w/The Day

E. Water Taxi Planning and Operations – Chair: Marian Galbraith (Report sent to TT)

1. RFP – The RFP went out in mid-December. A pre-proposal meeting was held on January 13 at Crocker’s Boatyard. Seven different parties were in attendance at the meeting, although it is not certain how many of them will actually bid. The Proposals are due February 16. The RFP, Questions and Answers from the pre-proposal meeting and the boat specifications are all posted on line at SCCOG and on the TRHP website.

RFP – Review Committee -C. Cox suggested a small Committee with experience in running an on-water business should review RFP.

2. Work on the Boats

a) The boats’ engines have been de-preserved. There is a coolant pipe that needs to be repaired and a battery box that has to be replaced.

b) A marine survey was performed on January 14. We are still awaiting the results. Based on the results, we will put together a work plan. We have one quote for painting but are waiting for the marine survey report to determine the course of action.

3. Budget

a) Expenditures - Expenditures incurred include the payment of two invoices to Joule Yacht Transport, totaling $5,990, to transport the two 40-foot surplus Navy boats from Williamsburg, VA to Crocker’s Boat Yard in New London; the payment in the amount of $5,102.24 to Stewart & Stevenson Power Products for recommissioning the engines on both boats; payment of $250 to New London Landmarks for placement of a program ad; and payment of $660.36 to The Day for placement of an ad in Mystic Country Magazine. Total expenditures to date are $12,002.60, leaving a balance of $33,497.40 in the water taxi funds being held by the SCCOG. We have a bill of approximately $6,000 to pay for insurance while in drydock.

b) State Funding – The state funding is still in place. A Memorandum of Understanding is being written between DOT and SCCOG on the use of the funds. It will be a reimbursement arrangement.

4. MOU’s

a) In addition to the MOU with DOT, we are working with Tom Tyler of DEEP to produce an MOU for the use of the DEEP- owned docks and with New London for the use of the City Pier. The New London Port Authority is in favor of the water taxi service using the City Pier. The City of Groton Harbor Management Commission has approved the placement of a mooring on the Groton side.

b) Discussions are continuing regarding a dock at the Nautilus. We are looking to review the plans for possible updates and examining the ownership and maintenance of the docks.

VI. Good of the Order

-Bond Commission – The January Agenda is pretty full. It does not appear that the TRHP money is on this month’s agenda. (Urban Act Grants were not listed on agenda.)

-Will enlist the help of DECD, DEEP, DOT and possibly Legislators to push for inclusion on February Agenda.

-Chris & Penny P. met with Avery Copp House to discuss TRHP Water Taxi and Historic Sites. (All parties want to be better known. The TRHP will be a way to raise awareness. Groton Bank not as prepared to serve visitors – not as many tourism assets in the immediate vicinity of the Water Taxi dock.

-Ft Griswold Park Supervisor Henry Alves will present the plans for Fort Griswold on Sunday (1-31-16) @ 2:00PM. Chris encouraged all to attend.

-Need wayfinding signage, more food vendors (P. Adams pointed out that there was a wayfinding plan done in the past when Mike Murphy was in the Groton Planning office.) Paige Bronk will look into.

-D. Donovan suggested that someone from the TT attend the Governor’s Conference on Tourism April 27 at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford. Deb also mentioned the CT Tourism Office’s regional meetings

- Jeff Harris (New London Port Authority) explained that the TRHP will have to interface with the Port Authority’s operations and Dock Master Barbara Neff. The Port Authority is very enthusiastic about the TRHP as is the Maritime Festival (Jeff is a Board member of the Festival). Jeff encouraged cross-public relations efforts – especially on the web pages for broader visibility. Tammy Dougherty already is working on publicity – TRHP should dovetail with her PR. The ultimate goal is to get people on the Water Taxis

-If the TRHP is interested in using the “Rocket Ship” at New London City Pier, Barbara Neff should be contacted. N.L. Dept. of Public Works would also need to be in the loop as restrooms would need to be open and the lights turned on for evening events.

VII. Next Meeting Date(s)

February 24, 2016 @ 0830 April 27, 2016 @ 0830 June 22, 2016 @ 0830

March 23, 2016 @ 0830 May 25, 2016 @ 0830 July 27, 2016 @0830

VIII. Next Meeting Location: TBD

IX. Adjourn @ 1008

