

**Thames River Heritage Park**

**Transition Team Meeting**

**Wednesday, March 23, 2016, 8:30AM (0830)**

**Ft Trumbull Conference Center**

**90 Walback Street**

**New London, Connecticut**

**MINUTES**

**Attendance:** Chris Cox (Chair), Penny Parsekian, Pamela Aey Adams (Secretary), Brent Eugenides, Juliet Hodge, Marian Galbraith, Paige R. Bronk, Richard Grahn, Capt. Paul Whitescarver

I. Call to Order: C. Cox

Chairman Cox called the meeting to order at 0837

II. THRP Chairman’s Report/Announcements

New London St. Patrick’s Parade - Very impressive and great fun! The crowd loved the parade and the floats. The TRHP Water Taxi/Float was nicely done. Special recognition to Dave Crocker who did a nice job of sprucing the boat up for the parade. Ten members/supporters of the TRHP Transition Team rode in the boat. C. Cox reports it was “Sun-will-come-up-tomorrow” stuff!

UCONN Avery Point Maritime Studies Group is putting together a History Trail of the Thames Maritime area. They plan to tell the stories of the maritime history of the state of Connecticut including in the Groton and New London Area. Stories of area Sea Captains, the history of the Oystering Industry, History, Health of the River, Food Sources and much more. The TRHP will work with UCONN on this endeavor.

III. Approval of Minutes February 24, 2016 – P. Adams

**MM: M. Galbraith – Approve as presented.**

**MS: P. Bronk**

**Vote: All in favor**

IV. Fiduciary Report – J. Butler (J. Butler is away, B. Eugenides provided report)

Brent Eugenides sent out Excel Spreadsheet on the current TRHP Financial Status.

To date: Total Receipts: $45,500.00

Total Expenses: $14,681.39

Balance: $30,818.61

M. Galbraith reported that there is one unpaid bill for the Documentation fee for each of the two vessels @ $162 /vessel = $324.

M. Galbraith also noted that the MOU had been signed with CONNDOT for the reimbursement of $100,000 to repair the Water Taxi. The $100,000 also covers water taxi operations, including marketing and preparing the launches for service TRHP will bill CONNDOT once each phase of the work is done. CONNDOT will reimburse TRHP in 30 days.

P. Bronk asked when the next $10,000 payment from the municipalities is due. M. Galbraith said that last year, payments were made in late FY15 and early FY16. It would be preferable if payments could be made in FY17. Invoices sent out to the municipal CEO’s on March 3, 2016.

M. Galbraith and P. Bronk suggested that a presentation should be made to the Groton City Council asking for their contribution of $10,000. A letter should also be prepared for the Council which should include TRHP Goals, Progress and the Benefit to the Community. Include the “Ask” in the letter.

R. Grahn asked if the TT was comfortable that the current funding the TT has is enough to cover getting the boats ready for summer. M. Galbraith said that the existing funding will be enough to cover one boat. The $100,000 CONNDOT funding will cover the second boat but, that is a reimbursement so, the TT has to cover expenses up front.

V. Committee Reports

A. Organization Committee – Chair: Juliet Hodge

Nothing to report at this time.

B. Governance Committee – Chair: Joe Selinger

**MM: P. Parsekian - To approve By-Laws as revised.**

**MS: P. Adams**

**Vote: All in favor**

C. Finance Committee – Chair: Brent Eugenides

Covered under Fiduciary Report. The Water Taxi Budget will be discussed later in meeting.

D. Communications & Programming Committee – Chair: Penny Parsekian

TRHP Event @ Garde Arts

First version of TRHP Map has been drafted. Some changes still need to be made. (Sample copy passed around.) The Eastern CT Regional Tourism District (ECRTD) provided some of the photos for the map.

C. Cox handed out a brochure with the brief history of the park and key areas of interest. The TRHP Map and brochure will be handed out at the Garde Arts Event.

65 People are already registered for the Event.

Volunteers needed to staff the table at the entrance – P. Adams, J. Hodge volunteered along with D. Donovan. P. Parsekian may assist to hand out brochures.

A Social Media “How To” sheet will be prepared to hand out explaining how to leverage social media marketing dollars for all sites in the TRHP.

All other TT Members should be in the Oasis Room circulating and speaking with the guests and site managers.

The Mayors will give “Welcome” speeches and M. Galbraith will also provide update on Water Taxi Operator. If all of the Operator contracts have been worked out, the Operator will be introduced at the event. (P. Bronk wanted to make certain that all of the issues/concerns and financial issues have been worked out and agreed to before the Operator is introduced.) M. Galbraith noted that J. Butler has been in touch with J. Selinger regarding contract verbiage.

Tentative Agenda:

Introduction

Welcome from the Mayors

TRHP Overview

What is special about the TRHP.

What it can accomplish.

Water Taxi Status

Intro of Operator

Park Development Status

Next Steps

P. Whitescarver asked if invitations went to the Submarine Force Museum Board. P. Parsekian believes they did but will verify.

P. Whitescarver pointed out that a member from the Submarine Force Museum BOD should be invited to the TT Meetings as the Nautilus Dock will be integral to the TRHP operations.

M. Galbraith asked what happened if an invitation that is emailed to a specific individual can be forwarded to others. She is concerned that the responses from others may not be recorded as it will look like she keeps responding.

PO Box – P. Parsekian asked of the TT would approve a $35 P.O. Box Rental Fee to cover 6 months of a box rental. TT should not do a full year at this point in the event that the TRHP procures an office. The TT can always rent for another 6 months if necessary.

**MM: P. Adams - To approve the expenditure of $35 to rent a P.O. Box for 6 months.**

**MS: C. Cox**

**Vote: All in favor**

*Connecticut Explored* magazine is preparing its summer activities edition. P. Parsekian suggests that the TRHP take out a 1/6th page Ad for the Water Taxi. The cost would be $280. This publication has a statewide circulation.

**MM: M. Galbraith – Approve $280 for a 1/6 page Advertisement in *Connecticut Explored* Magazine.**

**MS: C. Cox**

**Vote: All in favor**

Water Taxi Marketing – A Team needs to be built around marketing the Water Taxi. The Water Taxi Operator needs to be involved with social media. The message is to embrace what is here. Welcome are welcome in this venture. Social Media

Website Hosting – Web Host is stepping back. The Communications Committee needs to find someone to keep up website and embrace Social Media. P., Parsekian will ask Laura, Emily and Rita Rivera for recommendations for a volunteer who wants to get involved in this effort.

E. Water Taxi Planning and Operations – Chair: Marian Galbraith

RFP – Review Committee

An Operator has been selected. The name of the Operator will not be released until all negotiations have been completed.

The Operator has a USCG Captain’s License and a background in Marketing.

The Operator has an extensive background in operating Water Taxis and commercial Launches.

The Operator presented an excellent proposal – very thorough.

The Proposal was not the least expensive nor was it the most expensive.

The Operator has been very flexible with TRHP in terms of financial discussions.

P. Parsekian noted that the Parade was in reality the Kick-Off for the TRHP Water Taxi Marketing Campaign. The TT should be keeping the Operator in the loop as to everything that is being done for marketing.

Water Taxi – Cost estimates for preparing one vessel will be ~$23,000. The second vessel may need body work. A piece will be cut out of the side to enable Crockers to see structure. Boat may have been hit on the side. Current estimates indicate that it will take $9,665 to get boat ready and an additional; $14,000 fiberglass.

A portion of the funding will have to be paid to Crockers in advance of the work. The rest will be given to Crockers pending the receipt of the reimbursement from CONNDOT.

Equipment lists have been prepared including lifejackets, fire extinguishers and all equipment necessary to attain USCG Certification. P. Whitescarver suggested an AIS (Automated Information System) to let someone know where the vessel is.

Insurance for vessels and operation is in process.

Possible ticket prices costs to ride Water Taxi have been suggested ($5 for one leg of trip i.e., from New London to Groton or, $10-$15 for Round trip to all sites. Ticket pricing discussion is ongoing.

P. Whitescarver confirmed that the US Navy will take over and maintain dock at the Nautilus once construction is complete.

ACOE Permit

Bob Ross met with Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) regarding requirements for permit for Nautilus Dock. The State may have the funding necessary to construct the dock. Funding has not yet been confirmed by the TT.

Older plans for the Nautilus Dock were sent back to architect for review and to see if any newer technologies have been developed to make construction easier.

Possibility of grant money for constructing dock might be available through Navy.

MOU – DEEP – Working with Doug Jann from DEEP on MOU for use of the DEEP Docks.

MOU – CONNDOT – MOU has been signed and an invoice of $14,000 has been sent to DOT. Payment is expected in 30 days.

US Coast Guard – COI

A Marine Survey has been done. USCG Inspector Adrian Kavanaugh has seen and inspected the vessels in preparation for the COI. Cockers and Inspector Kavanaugh have a list of what needs to be done to certify the vessels.

Agreement with New London – An agreement has been reached with the City for a slip and a mooring in New London Harbor.

Discussion about a vehicle shuttle being made available from the Groton Dock to the Nautilus until such time as the Nautilus Dock is complete. One discussion was held with DATCO but, their estimate was is cost prohibitive. It was suggested to talk with Sea Bird Enterprises.

Good of the Order

Nothing at this time

Next Meeting Date(s)

May 4 @ 0830 (seCTer Office in Groton)

May 25, 2016 @ 0830 (Fort Trumbull)

June 22, 2016 @ 0830 (Submarine Force Museum – Nautilus – pending approval)

July 27, 2016 @0830 (Fort Trumbull

Adjourn @ 0942

MM: R. Grahn

MS: P. Parsekian

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela Aey Adams

Secretary