



Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority

SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF THE WOODS HOLE, MARTHA'S VINEYARD AND NANTUCKET STEAMSHIP AUTHORITY

April 20, 2021

The Members of the Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority Board held a meeting Tuesday, April 20, 2021, the first-floor conference room of the Authority's administration building, 228 Palmer Avenue, Falmouth. All five Board Members were present and participated via Zoom video conference call: Chair Kathryn Wilson (Falmouth); Vice Chair Moira E. Tierney (New Bedford); Secretary Robert F. Ranney (Nantucket); Robert R. Jones (Barnstable); and James M. Malkin (Dukes County).

1. General Manager Robert B. Davis provided an update on the Authority's efforts regarding the COVID-19 virus, commonly referred to as the coronavirus, as follows:
 - The Authority continues its cleaning and sanitization efforts to hopefully reduce potential sources for the virus at its facilities, vessels and on our buses.
 - Mask wearing compliance remains a challenge despite Gov. Baker's COVID order requiring masks, even when social distancing is possible, and President Biden's Executive Order 13998, which "requires masks be worn on all public maritime vessels, including ferries, to mitigate the risk of spreading COVID-19."
 - On March 22, 2021, the U.S. Coast Guard issued an update to its February 1, 2021, Marine Safety Information Bulletin titled "COVID-19 Safety Requirements in the Maritime Transportation System." This update requires wearing of a mask but also includes a list of exemptions, including children under 2 years old, individuals with a disability who cannot wear a mask, and for a brief period while eating, drinking, or taking medication.
 - Nevertheless, the Authority continues to reinforce the need to wear a mask via posted signs on the buses, at the terminals and onboard the vessels; making PA announcements at the terminals and onboard the vessels; and making additional rounds on the vessels to ensure compliance.
 - Vessel crews, before the beginning of their watch, are given a wellness check by a trained medical professional. Shoreside personnel are given a wellness questionnaire, which includes a thermal scan by a non-contact scanner, which they need to complete and provide their supervisor to be given clearance to report to work or are sent home.

- Most importantly, the Authority has told its employees that under no circumstances should they be coming to work while they are sick, for their own safety, the safety of their crewmembers and for the safety of our passengers.
- The Authority continues to monitor demand for vehicle space, but it is anticipated that the schedule that became effective April 1, 2021, will remain in effect through the end of the schedule, which is May 18, 2021.
- Staff is working with the Authority's Nantucket and Hyannis employees on what measures can be taken in order to resume driver services, at least initially for Nantucket residents.
- Staff continues to work with its concessionaire, Centerplate, on re-opening plans. Some of the plans may include:
 - Limiting offerings to prepackaged food and drink with outside-only consumption.
 - Greater use of vending machines.
 - Identifying where Plexiglas shields need to be installed.
 - Sourcing a vendor for canned, not bottled, water.

Centerplate continues to have staffing concerns, as do many seasonal businesses, but both parties are still looking for a tentative resumption date of May 19, 2021, which coincides with the start of the early summer schedule.

- The Authority has created a dedicated landing page on its website for coronavirus updates, www.steamshipauthority.com/2019coronavirus, so customers are asked to continue to check there for updates, as well as the Authority's Facebook and Twitter pages, its eNews and local media outlets. Since its inception, the dedicated coronavirus landing page has had nearly 141,500 visits with approximately 4,700 visits in the last 30 days and nearly 1,400 in the past seven days.
- At the end of March, the Authority started accepting proof of an off-island vaccination appointment from island residents seeking to book a space for vehicle travel in the same manner as if they were traveling for a medical appointment off island. This travel is subject to the following terms:
 - The individual making the reservation must have an active preferred or excursion profile.
 - Documentation of the vaccination appointment that includes the name and the time/date of the appointment must be provided.
 - Reservations are required to be made with a reservation supervisor. Call 508-477-8600 between 7:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. daily to speak with a supervisor.
 - Due to demand, travel on at a specific trip may not be possible; however, staff will make every effort to put passengers on a trip at the closest available time prior to the documented appointment time.
 - Travel for other medical appointments (doctor's appointments, surgeries, etc.) will receive priority over vaccination appointments.

2. Woods Hole Terminal Project Manager William J. Cloutier provided an update on the Woods Hole Terminal Reconstruction Project. Since the last Board meeting, marine contractor Jay Cashman Inc.'s barge crew continued preparing the monopiles for the fenders. This includes welding the spool piece stand-off for the fenders and the pad eyes for the support chains, as well as filling the top 4 feet of the monopile with concrete. The barge crew are also helping to drive the batter piles for the north head dolphin.

The landside crew started driving the 18-inch diameter piles for the north head dolphin. The landside crews are having to splice additional pipe to the original piles in order to get to the designed capacity requirements. The landside crew helped Lawrence Lynch Corp. with the stormwater piping. Lawrence Lynch finished installing the 18-inch diameter drainage on the south side of the slip.

The carpenters and iron workers completed the forms and rebar installation for the passenger platform curb and the cast-in-place decking. The carpenters and iron workers continued the forms and rebar installation for the sheet pile bulkhead cap and the forms and rebar for the transfer bridge foundation. The carpenters and iron workers are working on the forms for the columns for the canopy on the passenger pier, and they are working on the forms for the transfer bridge gallows.

The concrete subcontractor started and finished pouring the curbing for the south passenger platform. The concrete contractor then poured the cast-in-place deck for the passenger platform; they also poured the footing and walls for the transfer bridge.

The divers finished hanging the sheetpile for the bulkhead north of Slip No. 3. The carpenters and iron workers did the form work around the king pile for the bulkhead north of Slip No. 3. The railing contractor continued work on the north passenger pier float railing and siding.

Thus far, the Authority has sent out 143 community emails updates for the project.

3. Regarding the landside portion of the project, Mr. Davis said that, on March 23, 2021, a community input session on the landside design phase of the Woods Hole Terminal Reconstruction Project was held. This session corresponded to the completion of approximately 40% of the schematic design phase.

The project's design team, led by BIA.studio, was on the call to discuss design criteria and objectives. We received public comments and input with community stakeholders who attended the Zoom. Later following that session we received a list of questions and concerns from residents. Staff along with the design team are preparing responses to questions related to the project design.

A second session will be held when the schematic design phase is at approximately 90% completion. Then, during the subsequent design development phase, sessions will again be held at the 40% and 90% milestones (approximately in October and December of this year).

4. Director of Marine Operations Mark A. Amundsen provided an update on the dry dock for the *M/V Governor* at Thames Shipyard in New London, Connecticut. Highlights of the project include shaft and rudder repairs; blasting and coating the hull, main deck and sponson areas; and an overhaul of the emergency diesel generators and alternators. The current grand total for the contract, including credits and change orders, is \$1,216,517.

5. Health, Safety, Quality and Environmental Manager Angela M. Sampson provided an update on the Safety Quality Management System (SQMS) project. The SMSLLC consultants arrived on site to deliver hard copies of the operational manuals and checklists to fleet personnel as part of the “soft rollout” of the project. A draft Support Operations Manual has been distributed for review. The certification date of June 30, 2021, will be delayed slightly to make sure there is enough time for the crews to use the materials and make sure they are comfortable with the system that is in place.
6. Communications Director Sean F. Driscoll provided the following updates on the website redesign project:
 - An online survey to gather customer feedback about what works and what does not on the Authority’s current website closed on March 21, 2021, after being open to the public for 30 days. A total of 1,886 participants completed the survey, far above the threshold for a statistically viable sample that was set at 1,000 survey responses.
 - The project team’s marketing research firm, Consumer Insight Associates, also conducted telephone interviews to get more in-depth input on the website redesign from key stakeholders. Of the list of 28 individuals provided to them, they completed interviews with 23.
 - Consumer Insight Associates presented the full results to the project team earlier this month. Among the key takeaways from the survey was the fact that many of the most-requested features for the new website, such as the ability to filter the site by island and to set a default departure port, are already present on the current website. That suggests the challenge is one more of a design and user experience, although some new functions will be considered as well.
 - Four of the qualified participants of the online survey were randomly selected to receive one of four \$500 gift cards, either to Amazon.com or to a Cape or Islands-based merchant of their choice. The winners included one resident of each island, along with a resident from Connecticut and from New Hampshire. All four opted to receive an Amazon card.
 - The project team, along with consulting firm Regan Digital Studio, is now using the results to help develop the request for proposal. The project team expects to issue the RFP by the end of May 2021, and bring a recommendation to the Board for a vote in September 2021.
7. Mr. Davis presented the results of the Authority’s 2021 pre-season sale on high-speed ferry ticket books. For the 10th year in a row, the Authority offered a 20% discount on the sale of high-speed ferry ticket books. The pre-season sale promotion, which began on Sunday, March 21, 2021, and ended on Saturday, April 3, 2021, resulted in 3,199 ticket books sold and generated \$714,541 in revenue for the Authority at a cost of \$178,708 due to the discount offering. This represents a 33% increase in the number of books sold compared to the 2020 preseason sale.

In 2020, the Authority offered two rounds of the pre-season sale due to the situation surrounding COVID-19. Both rounds of the 2020 pre-season sale resulted in a combined total of 2,407 ticket books sold.

8. Mr. Davis provided an update on the Enabling Act’s provisions for funding in response to inquiries from the Port Council and Board regarding the possible creation of a “rainy day” fund. It was his opinion that the Enabling Act currently gives the Authority enough flexibility to deal with a large potential deficit by either temporarily borrowing money and/or issuing Revenue Anticipation notes to fund operations. In effect, the \$10,000,000 line of credit established last year with Martha’s Vineyard Savings Bank serves as its “rainy day fund” and could be increased if the need arose.
9. Counsel Steven M. Sayers provided an update on the recent activities of the Long-Range Vineyard Transportation Task Force and Woods Hole/Falmouth Noise & Traffic Mitigation Working Group Minutes. Among the activities of the Task Force were discussing the potential for barging the Vineyard’s solid waste off the island; composting solid waste on the Vineyard as is done on Nantucket; and investigating use of a New Bedford-based facility to provide additional service at a future date. Among the activities of the Working Group have been working with Greg Carroll, owner of Bruno’s Rolloff, to observe the traffic situation in Woods Hole; working with the Authority to change the stand-by travel procedure in Woods Hole to reduce the frequency of traffic backups; and discussions that led to the Town of Falmouth asking the state to review signage and speed limits on Woods Hole Road, a request that the Authority supported in writing.

Mr. Sayers noted that several Authority staff members, along with Falmouth Member Kathryn Wilson, will be participating in the Falmouth Transportation Management Committee meeting on Thursday, April 22, 2021, to discuss several items, including a request to bar truck traffic from Crane Street and Cowdry Road between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. daily. State Sen. Susan Moran, D-West Falmouth, will also be at the meeting to discuss her bill to amend the Enabling Act to require any vote of the Board to have at least one positive vote from a mainland community in order to pass.

10. The Board authorized Mr. Davis to execute a Memorandum of Understanding between the Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority and the Steamship Authority regarding prospective federal funding under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act in the amount of \$8,390,258 to finance certain projects and services, including defined eligible operational expenses.
11. The Board authorized Mr. Davis to execute the following procurement items:
 - Contract No. 08-2021, Dry Dock and Overhaul Services for the *M/V Gay Head*, to the lowest eligible and responsible bidder, Thames Shipyard of New London, Connecticut, for a total contract price of \$1,131,455.
 - Change Order No. 144 for Contract No. 16-2017, Woods Hole Ferry Terminal Construction – Waterside, with Jay Cashman Inc. for a total cost of \$410,138. The change order is related to the labor and materials to add additional piles to support monopile 24 following GZA GeoEnvironmental Inc.’s redesign efforts. Monopile 24 was driven to a depth of -65 feet where it reached driving refusal from underground obstructions, likely boulders. The design depth required for monopile 24 is -100 feet.

- Change Order No. 144 for Contract No. 16-2017, Woods Hole Ferry Terminal Construction – Waterside, with Jay Cashman Inc. at a not-to-exceed \$870,577. The change order is related to labor and fill materials to install the gravity structure for the south head dolphin in Slip No. 1. The Board previously approved the procurement of other materials needed to construct the structure, which is necessary given the obstructions that were encountered during pile driving. The vote is also contingent on the approval of the amended Order of Conditions by the Falmouth Conservation Commission and administrative approval by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.
- Change Order No. 1 for Contract No 12-2018, Supply and Deliver Two (2) MTU 12V4000 Short Block Assemblies and Associated “O” Rings, Bearings and Other Miscellaneous Parts, with Stewart & Stevenson Power Products LLC, in the amount of \$245,220.52, which will be covered by parts credits issued to the Authority following a settlement regarding the July 2019 catastrophic failure of one engine in the *M/V Iyanough*.

The next regularly scheduled monthly board meeting is currently scheduled for 9:30 a.m. May 18, 2021, via Zoom videoconferencing. Please look for the formal notice for the meeting that will appear on this website next month. Thank you.