



Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority

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

July 21, 2026

The Members of the Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority Board met on Tuesday, July 21, 2026, in the Select Board meeting room at Oak Bluffs Town Hall, 56 School Street, Oak Bluffs. All five (5) members were present: Chair Peter J. Jeffrey of Falmouth; Vice Chair Kreg R. Espinola of New Bedford; Secretary Robert F. Ranney of Nantucket; and Members Robert R. Jones of Barnstable and Edward T. Gavin of Dukes County. Messrs. Espinola, Ranney, and Jones participated via Zoom videoconferencing.

1. Board Chair Peter Jeffrey welcomed Kreg Espinola as the Board's new New Bedford representative. Kreg is an attorney at Burke, Espinola & Van Colen in New Bedford and is a graduate of the University of Massachusetts – Amherst and the New England School of Law. General Manager Alex Kryska said he looks forward to working with Mr. Espinola on important matters regarding the Authority's relationship with New Bedford.
2. Operations and Communications Center Manager Joseph J. Russas provided a report of the Authority's crew retention and succession planning. He reported that the current attrition rate is 3.3%, significantly lower than many transportation and maritime averages. He noted the Authority began the AB-to-mate program in 2017 in response to future retirement risks, which has resulted in the successful replacement of many retiring vessel officers and the development of pilots from within the organization. Additionally, 51 employees have gone through the ordinary seafarer to able-bodied seafarer program, and 16 employees have gone through the wiper to qualified member of the engine department (QMED) program. All of those employees continue to work for the Authority.
3. Director of Engineering and Maintenance Zach Lawrence reviewed the progress of the following engineering and maintenance projects:
 - *M/V Barnstable* dry dock at Thames Shipyard is under way. Highlights include hull inspection and cleaning, shaft inspections, and installation of the skeg. He noted that the vessel was delayed in the beginning of the dry dock period and the work was now scheduled to be complete August 14, 2026.

- The *M/V Sankaty* dry dock spec is on the street, with bids set to open August 6, 2026.
 - The *M/V Woods Hole* and *M/V Iyanough* specs are under development and review.
 - The Fairhaven Transfer Bridge Replacement Project specs are under development and review.
4. Chief Operating Officer Mark H. Amundsen shared an update on the Woods Hole Terminal Reconstruction Project. The terminal and utility buildings are now open, and Mark shared images from its interior.
 5. Mr. Kryska shared the most recent version of the Woods Hole Terminal site plan and said discussions were ongoing with the Town of Falmouth over the curb cut onto Railroad Avenue. Most recently, the Authority was asked to reduce the width of the curb cut to make it narrower, and to limit the number of trucks using Railroad Avenue for exit from the property. The plan is still in discussion with the Falmouth Department of Public Works and will eventually be reviewed by the Traffic and Bicycle and Pedestrian committees before being reviewed by the Select Board.
 6. Mr. Amundsen shared an update on the True North Initiative and the replacement of the reservation system. Recent progress includes the drafting of the Phase 3 policies, the scheduling of shipper meetings, the release of R1.4 from E-Dea for testing, and a recent onsite visit from E-Dea. Upcoming activities include the scheduling of public town hall meetings, finalizing the website launch plan, continued testing, and the formulation of the training plan.
 7. The Board approved the temporary suspension of gift card sales starting August 1, 2026, until the gift cards can be purchased in the E-Dea reservation system. Treasurer/Comptroller Mark K Rozum said this was being done to reduce the number of existing gift cards that would need to be migrated into the new reservation system.
 8. Communications Director Sean F. Driscoll discussed the “Pause for Paws” campaign being launched by the Communications and Marketing Department to inform travelers about the risks of letting dogs walk on hot steel decks.
 9. The Board voted to authorize a license with Offshore Tug and Transportation to provide freight service between New Bedford and Nantucket from August 2026 to April 2027, subject to the license terms proposed by staff.
 10. The Board affirmed the schedule for the upcoming Governance and Capital Projects committees. The Governance Committee will meet the third Thursday of the month starting August 20, 2026; the Capital Projects Committee will meet the second Tuesday of the month, starting August 11, 2026.
 11. Director of Shoreside Operations Alison A. Fletcher provided an update on the tracking of early-morning truck arrivals in Woods Hole. She said letters are sent to shippers who have trucks that arrive two minutes or more prior to the approved arrival window. As of June 29, 2026, 728 trucks arrived between 4:30 a.m. and 6 a.m. Of those, 15 trucks were identified as Diesel Direct trucks fueling the Authority’s vessels, and 44 were SodexoLive!

trucks delivering concessions supplies for the vessels. Twenty-four trucks were determined to have arrived early, with a total of 78 occurrences. The average early arrival time was 5.21 minutes. However, she noted that the timestamp on the camera used for tracking was inaccurate. After that was adjusted, the total number of shippers fell to 20 and the occurrences fell to 44, with an average early arrival of 6.48 minutes.

12. Mr. Kryska noted the Authority had received a petition objecting to the scheduling of the 5:30 a.m. trips from Woods Hole and Vineyard Haven in its draft 2027 Operating Schedules. A public hearing was held July 9, 2026, subject to Section 15A of the Authority's Enabling Act, and staff is currently reviewing the testimony received at that hearing before bringing the draft schedules back to the Port Council and Board for their review and vote.
13. The Board authorized the purchase of renewable biodiesel fuel known as RD99 for use on the *M/V Island Home* from August 1-December 31, 2026, at a cost of \$165,000 for 200,000 gallons.

The next monthly Board meeting is scheduled to be held Tuesday, August 18, 2026, at the Authority's Hyannis Terminal, 141 School Street, Hyannis. The formal notice for the meeting will appear at www.steamshipauthority.com/about/meeting_notices.