

MINUTES
OF THE
PORT COUNCIL
OF THE
WOODS HOLE, MARTHA’S VINEYARD
AND NANTUCKET STEAMSHIP AUTHORITY

October 14, 2025

Second-Floor Meeting Room
Steamship Authority Hyannis Terminal
141 School Street, Hyannis, Massachusetts

Port Council Members present: Chair Nathaniel E. Lowell of Nantucket; Vice Chair Gordon M. Carr of New Bedford; and members Robert S.C. Munier of Falmouth; Joseph E. Sollitto Jr. of Oak Bluffs (who arrived at 9:08 a.m.); and John F. Cahill of Tisbury. Mr. Sollitto was present in Hyannis, and the remaining members participated via Zoom videoconferencing.

Port Council Members absent: Secretary Gregory R. Egan of Barnstable; and Member Eric R. Dawicki of Fairhaven.

Authority Board Members present: Chair James M. Malkin of Dukes County, Vice Chair Peter J. Jeffrey of Falmouth, and Member Robert R. Jones of Barnstable. Mr. Jones was present in Hyannis, and Messrs. Malkin and Jeffrey observed the meeting via Zoom.

Authority Management present: General Manager Robert B. Davis; Treasurer/Comptroller Mark K. Rozum; General Counsel Terence G. Kenneally; Chief Operating Officer Mark H. Amundsen; Communications Director Sean F. Driscoll; Director of Shoreside Operations Alison A. Fletcher; Director of Human Resources Janice L. Kennefick; Director of Engineering and Maintenance Zachary A. Lawrence (who participated via Zoom); Director of Information Technologies Stephen M. Colman; and Assistant Treasurer Courtney M. Oliveira.

1. Mr. Lowell called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

2. Mr. Lowell announced Mr. Driscoll was making a video and audio recording of the day's meeting; Louisa Hufstader (representing the *Vineyard Gazette*) and Kaie Quigley (representing *The Inquirer and Mirror*) indicated they were making audio recordings of the meeting. During the meeting, Eunki Seonwoo (representing the *Martha's Vineyard Times*), indicated to Mr. Driscoll that he had joined the meeting and was making an audio recording.
3. Mr. Lowell announced that, pursuant to Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, as amended, Port Council members were participating remotely in the day's meeting because their physical attendance would be unreasonably difficult. Those members were participating via Zoom videoconferencing and were clearly audible to one another. As a result of the members' remote participation, all votes taken were to be by roll call vote.
4. Mr. Davis then noted the passing of former Board Member Robert S. Marshall, who was Falmouth's representative to the Board for eleven (11) years. Mr. Marshall was appointed to the Board in January 2003 and represented Falmouth ably and fully until December 2013. During those eleven (11) years, an astonishing number of projects or purchases that are still relevant to daily operations took place, including the construction of the *M/V Island Home* (whom his wife Saralee christened) and *M/V Iyanough*; along with the conversion of the *M/V Katama*, *M/V Gay Head* and the *M/V Sankaty*. He was also a part of the Board for the reconstruction of the Oak Bluffs Terminal.

Mr. Davis then invited the attendees to join him in a moment of silence.
5. Upon a motion by Mr. Cahill and a second by Mr. Sollitto, the Port Council **voted** 5-0 to approve the minutes of its meeting on September 9, 2025.
6. Mr. Lawrence shared a PowerPoint update on the status of the *M/V Monomoy*. Recent milestones for the *M/V Monomoy* include the vessel being returned to the water for the rest of the conversion project; completion of the anchor windlass; installation of the bridge console; installation of coatings on the freight deck; and installation of components on the passenger space. He noted the propeller shaft installation, hull blasting, hull painting, vessel undocking, and stability test are complete, and the sea trials are pending the review by the Marine Safety Center, which is not in operation due to the federal government shutdown.

Mr. Munier asked if there were any noteworthy changes to the *M/V Monomoy* based on the other two (2) vessels' conversions and operations. Mr. Lawrence said, other than the skeg extension, there were no differences. Mr. Lowell asked if the propeller pitch was the same, and Mr. Lawrence confirmed it was.

Mr. Gordon asked if the skeg extension changed the vessel's draft, and Mr. Lawrence said only very, very slightly.

In response to a question from Mr. Cahill, Mr. Lawrence said the project was \$4.4 million over budget, or about five percent (5%) in total for the three (3) vessels, including acquisition, conversion, owner-furnished equipment, and personnel.

7. Mr. Lawrence shared a presentation updating the status of the *M/V Martha's Vineyard* dry dock. Highlights of the project include propeller refurbishment, steel repairs to the freight deck and galley deck, hull coatings, bow thruster maintenance, piping renewals, and pump and motor overhauls. The total project cost, including credits and change orders, now stands at \$1,488,779.

Mr. Munier asked if the steel renewals were planned or unexpected, and Mr. Lawrence said those were known and in the contract. Mr. Amundsen noted the steel renewals were a result of the Authority's gauging program, and staff was already planning the renewals for the next dry dock cycle.

8. Mr. Sollitto then asked the status of the *M/V Barnstable* propeller. Mr. Amundsen said it was discovered that four (4) blades had damage on the leading edge. The cause of the damage is still under review, but both the *M/V Aquinnah* and *M/V Woods Hole* were inspected and no similar damage had been found. A solicitation is now out for a shipyard to perform the refurbishment, and Hornbeck LLC has agreed to loan the Authority blades in the interim. Mr. Davis noted this discovery was a result of a routine dive inspection as part of the Authority's preventative maintenance program.

9. Mr. Davis shared an update on the Woods Hole Terminal Reconstruction Project. Recent milestones at the utility building included installation of bathroom fixtures on the second floor; installation of cabinetry, countertops, and wood panel ceilings in the break room; installation of epoxy flooring on the first floor; installation of wood panels on the ceilings; and preparation for the installation of the generator. At the terminal building, installation of copper soffits and facias; installation of stone siding; installation of the raised concrete surface for the mechanical room; wall framing; and drilling to replace three (3) failed geothermal wells at the employee parking lot and in the staging area. The current cost estimate is \$36.4 million, about \$2.8 million under budget.

Mr. Davis noted general contractor Colantonio Inc. is still on target and is about sixty-five percent (65%) done with the project. The utility building is expected to be done by the end of year, and the terminal building is expected to be done by the end of May 2026. The Authority has sent 293 email updates over the course of the project.

Mr. Munier asked who was responsible for the failed geothermal wells, and Mr. Davis said it was the contractor.

Mr. Sollitto asked about the additional costs to the project due to the design changes. Mr. Davis said it is hard to say specifically, but the original scope of the project called for the

project to be done by now. Years ago, the Board approved a change order with BIA.studio for additional design work and redesigning the utility building to its current design added approximately \$2.5 million to the project's overall cost.

10. Mr. Rozum then delivered an update on the reservation system project. E-Dea was recently on site for two (2) weeks and visited several of the Authority's locations and held in-depth meetings on pricing adjustments, booking flows, and integrations with financial and payment systems. Overall the meetings were helpful, he said, and Authority staff are now working in the E-Dea sandbox to build some of the systems.

Mr. Cahill asked if the contract had been signed, and Messrs. Rozum and Kenneally said it was down to the final details and should be signed soon.

Mr. Cahill asked if there could be an outline of how the new reservation system could provide additional benefits to the new terminal.

11. Ms. Fletcher then presented proposed revisions to the 2026 Operating Schedules. She noted staff had identified that the initially approved 2026 schedule was a reduction of service during the late summer schedules compared to the 2025 schedule. Staff is now proposing that the 2026 Late Summer Operating schedules mirror the 2025 schedules by triple-crewing the *M/V Monomoy* on the Vineyard route and running the *M/V Barnstable* with two (2) single crews Monday–Friday on the Nantucket route.

Mr. Davis noted this report was for information only at this point and the schedule modification would be advertised for public comment and brought to the Port Council and Board for further consideration and review. In response to a question from Mr. Munier, Mr. Davis said it was necessary to advertise the scheduling changes because two (2) additional trips were needed on the Vineyard route with an optional third trip.

12. Mr. Rozum then reviewed via a PowerPoint presentation the August 2025 business summary, which showed the Authority carried more passengers (up 5.8%), more vehicles of less than twenty (20) feet (up 0.9%) and fewer freight trucks (down. 3.9%) than it did in the same period in 2024. Year-to-date figures show the Authority has carried more passengers (up 2.2%), more vehicles of less than twenty (20) feet (up 0.6%), and fewer freight trucks (down 0.4%) than it did for the same period in 2024.

During August 2025, the Authority's vessels had 2,580 trips scheduled, of which two (2) trips were canceled for mechanical reasons on the Vineyard route and four (4) trips were canceled for mechanical reasons on the Nantucket route, he said.

In August 2025, the Authority had approximately \$22,626,000 in operating income and \$11,859,000 in operating expenses, which, combined with nonoperating income and nonoperating expenses, resulted in a net operating income of \$11,580,000, which was

\$1,258,000 more than budgeted. Year to date, the Authority has seen a net operating gain of \$2,696,000, about \$904,000 lower than budgeted.

Preliminary traffic data for September 2025, showed the Authority essentially the same number of passengers and fewer vehicles of all sizes (down 1.0%) on both routes combined compared to the same month in 2024, he said.

Mr. Sollitto asked if an analysis could be done on the embarkation fee revenue lost by Oak Bluffs due to diversions. Mr. Rozum said he could do so by the end of the year.

Mr. Carr asked if the capacity changes distort the year-to-year comparisons. Mr. Rozum said the numbers would be more comparable to 2023 when the *M/V Woods Hole* was on the Nantucket run, but this year the Authority was better matching capacity and demand.

13. Mr. Rozum and Ms. Oliveira presented the proposed 2026 Operating Budget. Mr. Rozum noted that the Authority held three (3) budget open houses and the input was valuable. Since last presenting to the Port Council, \$150,000 was added for training related to the new reservation system, and staffing was revisited for the Reservation Office and the Woods Hole Terminal.

Ms. Oliveira noted that the baseline for revenues is the actual traffic statistics from August 2024-July 2025 and the operating expenses are based on the approved 2026 Operating Schedule. Additionally, the budget reflects the *M/V Monomoy* coming online and the reservation system launching in the fourth quarter.

In 2026, the projected operating revenues are \$152,742,907 and the projected operating expenses are \$162,081,970 that, when combined with other income and expenses, results in a net income from operations of \$2,595,166, Ms. Oliveira said.

Significant operating expense changes include vessel maintenance (up \$3,065,129), payroll (up \$2,882,760), depreciation (up \$2,219,537), and terminal maintenance (up \$1,913,950). Vessel fuel oil costs are projected to be down \$295,782, she said. Ms. Oliveira reviewed specifics of the maintenance budgets, noting that thirty-two percent (32%) of the vessel maintenance budget was for five (5) dry dockings and fifty-four percent (54%) of the landside maintenance was for repairs to dolphins and docks.

Positive variations in projected operating revenue are \$1,333,214 in passenger revenue and \$765,650 in freight revenue, while negative variations are a drop of \$1,732,583 in automobile revenue, \$1,059,001 in rent revenue, and \$33,929 in parking revenue, she said.

Ms. Oliveira noted that grant revenue income was expected to increase by \$3.9 million, covering costs related to vessel dry docks, slip and pier repairs in Vineyard Haven, transfer bridge repairs in Fairhaven, and vessel engine and machinery parts.

Mr. Rozum noted several operational benefits from last year's budget, namely:

- increased preventative vessel maintenance investments
- continued investment in training costs
- settled all union contracts
- forty-nine percent (49%) decrease in mechanical trip cancellations compared to 2024
- sixty-three percent (63%) decrease in crewing and schedule trip cancellations compared to 2024
- new reservation system expected to go live in fourth quarter 2026

Mr. Cahill asked for clarification about how the automobile revenue figure was obtained. Mr. Rozum said they looked at actual traffic statistics from August 1, 2024–July 31, 2025, and applied it to the current rate structure to project forward. Mr. Cahill noted it was a large number, and Mr. Rozum said it was a drop of 3,500 vehicles overall.

Mr. Munier asked to what extent the decrease in standard-fare travel was related to other demographic factors versus the cost of travel. Mr. Rozum noted opening-day reservations were still very robust, and the overall cost of a car versus the costs of a rental house was still a small portion of the price of a vacation.

Mr. Carr underscored the return of the investments approved by the Port Council and Board via the 2025 Operating Budget and said it was good to see those changes. Mr. Lowell said the cancelled trip figures needed to be drilled down even more.

Mr. Sollitto asked the role of the Port Council in regards to the budget and if it had taken over the role of the Finance Advisory Board before the law changed; Mr. Kenneally said the Port Council’s role is to provide a financial review and recommendations to the Board.

14. Mr. Rozum then reviewed the draft proposed 2026 rate adjustments. After reviewing increases in maintenance, training, and IT expenses, he said the total rate adjustment revenue is \$7,436,890, of which \$4,397,962 will come from the Vineyard route and \$3,038,928 will come from the Nantucket route.

The proposed fare adjustments by category are as follows:

▪ Passenger fares	\$1,810,043
▪ Excursion rates	\$489,559
▪ Standard fare vehicles	\$1,797,955
▪ Vehicles over 20’ in length	\$1,991,234
▪ Parking – Permits & Daily Fee	\$1,269,457
▪ Miscellaneous	\$78,642

The proposed Vineyard route adjustments are as follows:

Rate	Proposed Adjustment	Additional Revenue
Standard fare vehicles under 20' in length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$3.50-\$5.50 for 1/1–5/14 and 11/1–12/31 ▪ \$6.00 from 9/15– 10/31 ▪ \$6.00 Mon-Thurs & \$8.00 Fri–Sun 5/15– 9/14 ▪ \$55.00 – Auto 10-Ride coupon book 	\$1,198,350
Excursion Fare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$1.75 from 1/1–5/14 and 9/15–12/31, each segment ▪ \$2.75 from 5/15–9/14, each segment 	\$350,026
Freight	5.5% increase	\$866,449
Passengers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$0.50 one-way Adult ▪ \$0.25 one-way Child/Senior ▪ \$4.50 per 10-Ride Adult book ▪ \$2.75 per 10-Ride Child/Senior book ▪ \$9.25 per 46-Ride book 	\$1,078,277
Daily Fee Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$5.00 per day from 1/1–3/31 & 11/1–12/31 ▪ \$8.00 per day from 4/1–5/14 & 9/15–10/31 	\$760,415
Parking Permits	\$200 Woods Hole Lot \$50 Palmer Ave. Lot	\$129,100

The proposed Nantucket rate adjustments are as follows:

Rate	Proposed Adjustment	Additional Revenue
Standard fare vehicles under 20' in length	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$10.00 & \$15.00 – 1/1-5/14 and 11/1-12/31 ▪ \$15.00 – Mon-Thur 5/15-9/14 ▪ \$20.00 – Fri-Sun 5/15-9/14 ▪ \$15.00 – 9/15-10/31 ▪ \$80.00 – Auto 6-ride coupon book 	\$599,605
Excursion fare	\$4.50 one-way 1/1-5/14 and 9/15-12/31 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$6.25 one-way 5/15-9/14 	\$139,533
Vehicles 20' and over in length	5.5% increase	\$1,124,785
Passengers – High Speed Ferry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$2.00 one-way Adult/\$3.00 Same Day RT Adult ▪ \$1.00 one-way Child/\$2.00 Same Day RT Child ▪ \$1.00 one-way Senior/\$2.50 Same Day RT Senior ▪ \$8.00-16.00 per 10-Ride book (Adult, Child, Senior) 	\$496,289
Passengers – Conventional Ferry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$1.00 one-way Adult ▪ \$0.50 one-way Child/Senior ▪ \$8.00 per 10-Ride Adult book ▪ \$5.00 per 10-Ride Child/Senior book 	\$235,478
Parking Permits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ \$75 Lewis Bay ▪ \$50 Yarmouth Road 	\$16,900

Mr. Rozum then reviewed usage of excursion rate fares on both routes in 2024 and several alternatives, including a three-tier flat five percent (5%) increase and a three-tier adjusted increase. In both cases, the rate periods would be more defined to allow for lower rates in the winter months with island residents travel. In response to a question from Mr. Cahill, Mr. Rozum said he was recommending the three-tier five percent (5%) increase, which would make the one-way rates on the Vineyard route \$38.25 from January 1–March 31, \$41.00 from April 1–May 31, \$55.75 from June 1–August 31, and \$41.00 from September 1–December 31. On the Nantucket route, the rates would be \$95.50 from January 1–March 31, \$100.00 from April 1–May 31, \$129.25 from June 1–August 31, and \$100.00 from September 1–December 31.

Mr. Rozum noted that, when the program is reexamined as a whole, further tiering will be examined. He further noted that the cost of two (2) adults and two (2) children were included in these fares.

Mr. Lowell said the tiers were giving back to the community while tweaking the costs, and he thought it was a “good exercise.” Mr. Rozum said keeping the rates tied to the calendar months made it easier for customers.

Mr. Lowell said he hoped the new system would allow for pricing certain trips on certain days differently based on demand.

Mr. Munier asked what the overall excursion rate increase was with these changes, and he said it is similar to the other rates, approximately five percent (5%). Mr. Munier said he wished to reiterate past comments that the excursion rates, even with these increases, are not keeping pace with increases on other categories. Mr. Rozum said he agreed, and if the fare had gone up in concert with inflation, the overall increases would be \$7.00. He said, with the reservation system change, staff may be able to set the excursion rate as a flat percentage of the standard fare costs. Mr. Munier said he remembered this discussion from last year and it still had not happened.

Then, upon a motion by Mr. Sollitto and a second by Mr. Cahill, the Port Council **voted** 5-0 to recommend the 2026 Operating Budget to the Board.

Then, upon a motion by Mr. Sollitto and a second by Mr. Carr, the Port Council **voted** 4-1 to recommend the 2026 rate adjustments, with the flat five percent (5%) increase to the excursion rates, to the Board. (Mr. Munier voted no as he indicated that excursion fares are lagging behind other increases.)

15. Mr. Sollitto thanked Mr. Rozum and Ms. Oliveira for coming to the Vineyard for the budget open house and said it went very well. He also thanked the Vineyard terminal staff for their hard work during a messy weather weekend.
16. Mr. Davis noted the crew of the *M/V Island Home*, while on a transit from Vineyard Haven to Woods Hole, spotted a person in the water outside of Great Harbor in Woods Hole. The crew immediately responded for a man-overboard and notified the U.S. Coast Guard.

Captain Frostholtm, along with Pilot Furtado and captain trainee Fritsch, maneuvered the vessel while crew members, as well as passengers, attempted to keep the person in sight. Conditions at the time were less than ideal with winds up to thirty (30) mph and six to eight (6-8) foot seas.

The *M/V Island Home* prepared to launch the rescue boat but the USCG arrived on scene before the deployment. The *M/V Island Home* remained on scene until no further assistance could be provided.

Mr. Davis offered the Authority’s thanks and appreciation to the crew of the *M/V Island Home* for their quick actions, which ultimately resulted in a positive outcome. He also offered thanks to the passengers onboard who assisted in the attempts to locate the person.

17. In response to Mr. Lowell's call for public comment, Eunki Seonwoo asked if there were additional details about how the individual fell overboard. Mr. Davis said there were not at this time.
18. Beth O'Connor asked if the *M/V Monomoy* was not in the water by January 1, 2026, how that would affect depreciation costs. Mr. Rozum said if the *M/V Monomoy*'s unavailability was known before the Board's next meeting, the budget could be adjusted, but if it was not in the water then the depreciation costs would come in below budget.

Ms. O'Connor then said she assumed the Port Council carefully reviewed the budget prior to voting. Mr. Rozum noted that the updated budget materials were sent out the Friday before the meeting, and he noted the mapping issue for the *M/V Monomoy*'s fuel had been corrected.

Ms. O'Connor said there were two (2) issues brought up at the recent public outreach meeting on the Vineyard that did not seem to be addressed. The first was the cost of R99 fuel, which Mr. Rozum said would be brought to the Board for consideration. The second was the advertising budget. Mr. Sollitto noted he, Mr. Cahill, and Mr. Malkin were going to meet with island tourism agencies for discussion. Mr. Lowell noted the mix of advertising may need to be looked at more carefully. Mr. Driscoll noted the majority of advertising expenses were aimed at the high-speed passenger-only ferry service on the Nantucket route.

Then, at 11:09 a.m., upon a motion from Mr. Sollitto and a second by Mr. Cahill, the Port Council **voted** 5-0 to adjourn its meeting.

A TRUE RECORD

Gregory R. Egan, Secretary

Documents and Exhibits Used at the Port Council's October 14, 2025, Meeting

1. Agenda for the Port Council's October 14, 2025, meeting (posted October 9, 2025).
2. Recording announcement.
3. Statement regarding remote participation.
4. Minutes of the September 9, 2025, Port Council meeting (draft dated October 9, 2025).
5. Presentation, *M/V Monomoy* Conversion at Alabama Shipyard, dated October 14, 2025.
6. Presentation, *M/V Martha's Vineyard* Dry Dock at Thames Shipyard, dated October 14, 2025.
7. Presentation, Woods Hole Terminal Reconstruction Project Update, dated October 14, 2025.
8. Presentation, August 2025 Business Summary, dated October 14, 2025.
9. August 2025 Business Summary.
10. Staff Summary #A-719, Proposed 2026 Operating Budget, undated draft.
11. Presentation, 2026 Proposed Operating Budget, dated October 14, 2025.
12. Staff Summary #A-720, Proposed 2026 Rate Adjustments, undated draft.
13. Presentation, 2026 Proposed Rate Adjustments, dated October 14, 2025.