

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

November 4, 2025

Virtual Meeting

Port Council Members present: Chair Nathaniel E. Lowell of Nantucket; Vice Chair Gordon M. Carr of New Bedford; Secretary Gregory R. Egan of Barnstable; and members Joseph E. Sollitto Jr. of Oak Bluffs; and John F. Cahill of Tisbury. All members participated via Zoom videoconferencing.

Port Council Members absent: Members Eric R. Dawicki of Fairhaven and Robert S.C. Munier of Falmouth.

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, all of whom observed the meeting via Zoom.

Authority Management present: Treasurer/Comptroller Mark K. Rozum; General Counsel Terence G. Kenneally; Chief Operating Officer Mark H. Amundsen; Communications Director Sean F. Driscoll; Reservations and Customer Relations Manager Angela C. Campbell; Director of Shoreside Operations Alison A. Fletcher; Director of Engineering and Maintenance Zachary A. Lawrence; and Director of Information Technologies Stephen M. Colman. All staff members participated via Zoom.

1. Mr. Lowell called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.
2. Mr. Lowell announced Mr. Driscoll was making a video and audio recording of the day’s meeting; Kaie Quigley (representing *The Inquirer and Mirror*); Eunki Seonwoo (representing the *Martha’s Vineyard Times*); and Louisa Hufstader (representing the *Vineyard Gazette*) indicated they were making audio recordings of the meeting.

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. Upon a motion by Mr. Sollitto and a second by Mr. Carr, the Port Council **voted** 5-0 to approve the minutes of its meeting on October 14, 2025.
5. Mr. Lawrence shared a PowerPoint update on the status of the *M/V Monomoy*. After discussing photos of the stern quarter, the wheelhouse, the freight deck, and the crew gallery, he noted that the documents needed to proceed to the sea trials are pending review by the Marine Safety Center, which is not in operation due to the federal government shutdown. Mr. Amundsen said Coast Guard Sector Mobile (Alabama) is assisting the Authority to get through this stage of the project. Although they, too, have reduced staffing due to the shutdown, they are working with the Authority as best as possible.

In response to a question from Mr. Lowell, Mr. Lawrence said the Authority was taking all lessons learned from the first two (2) vessels and their conversions and applying them to the *M/V Monomoy* project.

6. Mr. Lawrence then shared a presentation on the unscheduled dry dock of the *M/V Barnstable*, reviewing damage to the port and starboard propellers that was discovered during a routine underwater dive survey. Mr. Lawrence noted no reports were made from vessel crews for a grounding that could cause this damage. Other vessels on the Hyannis-Nantucket route were inspected and found to be in good order. Mr. Amundsen said the cause of the damage is under investigation, but staff were very surprised by the discovery.

Mr. Lowell noted the vessel would have had less thrust as a result. Mr. Amundsen said the vessel likely hit a rock or similar object.

Mr. Egan asked if the rest of the hull and rudder was inspected and, if so, if any other signs of damage were found. Mr. Amundsen said deep scraping was found on the port forward quarter of the hull that did not appear to be the result of sand, and scratches were also found on the starboard. It's possible the damage occurred while the vessel was turning. Mr. Egan asked if any vibration was noted by the crew, and Messrs. Lawrence and Amundsen said the incident is still under investigation.

Mr. Amundsen noted that Hornbeck Offshore LLC loaned the Authority eight (8) propeller blades to use while new blades are being fabricated. Mr. Egan asked if there was any idea of when the damage occurred. Mr. Amundsen said that there were no reports from the ship's crew.

7. Mr. Amundsen shared an update on the Woods Hole Terminal Reconstruction Project. Recent milestones at the utility building included installation of glass wall partitions on the second floor; completion of major electrical work; final finishes of epoxy flooring; installation of stone treads and risers on the first-floor landing area; installation of wood soffits; and external preparation for pavement work. Highlights at the terminal building include installation of metal studs; placement of mechanical equipment; painting of steel exterior posts and beams; placement of rebar inside the wooden forms in preparation for a concrete pour; and ongoing stone siding work on the west and north sides of the building. The current cost estimate is \$36.4 million, about \$2.8 million under budget.

8. Tom Innis with Gibbous LLC then delivered an update on the reservation system project. Twenty (20) of the 21 (21) workshops with E-Dea have been held, and the project is on track in terms of the plan. Both E-Dea and the Authority are working together toward a comprehensive launch plan. E-Dea was recently on site for two (2) weeks and visited several of the Authority's locations, he said.

Ms. Fletcher reviewed the project summary dashboard, which showed all workstreams are on track. Ms. Fletcher said her team is using the test system to translate the current allocations into the E-Dea system.

Mr. Innis said the town halls are being scheduled for December, and the dates should be available in the near future.

Mr. Sollitto asked if the system will be on track for October or November 2026; Mr. Rozum said it would be and, at that time, it would be used for reservations booked starting in January 2027.

Mr. Cahill asked if the contract had been signed, and Mr. Rozum said he was waiting to hear from General Manager Robert B. Davis, who was traveling.

Mr. Cahill asked Mr. Innis what “excites” him about this system; Mr. Innis said the interface of the white-label website provides a good user experience and would provide the same experience across mobile and desktop platforms.

Mr. Cahill said beta users had been discussed and asked when that would happen; Mr. Innis said the town halls would be an opportunity to identify those interested in being beta testers.

9. Ms. Fletcher then presented a request to extend reservation-only days to year-round on the Vineyard route for 2026. She noted this continuation was due to the construction at the Woods Hole Terminal and the planned pier repair project in Vineyard Haven. She noted the enhancements that had been made to the Blue Line for island residents and that the program would continue next year.

Mr. Sollitto asked when and if standby would be coming back and if Palmer Avenue would be used for staging standby travel. Ms. Fletcher said once construction in Woods Hole was completed and staff had a better grasp of staging, it would be considered.

Mr. Lowell asked if Blue Line was standby; Ms. Fletcher said it was essentially standby for island residents only.

Mr. Cahill asked how long this would be in effect; Ms. Fletcher said for the entirety of 2026 for both Woods Hole and Vineyard Haven. He asked how the Authority moves from discussion of staging at Palmer Avenue to a trial, and Ms. Fletcher said the number of permits at the lot versus the number of spaces would have to be examined.

Then, upon a motion by Mr. Egan and a second by Mr. Carr, the Port Council **voted** 5-0 to recommend the matter to the Board.

10. Mr. Rozum then reviewed the trip diversions from Oak Bluffs to Vineyard Haven from 2016-2025 (excluding 2020), which was being done at the request of Mr. Sollitto. He noted the most diversions typically happened in September and October, and that the overall number of trips scheduled into Oak Bluffs was up fourteen percent (14%) from 2016 due to the lengthening of the schedule at that facility. This year, more than 200 diversions resulted from two (2) events—the effects of Hurricane Erin in August and a nor'easter in October.

Mr. Sollitto asked how much embarkation revenue is lost by the Town of Oak Bluffs by those trips being diverted. Mr. Rozum said the data would have to be reviewed to get those estimates. He said he would work on that by the end of December.

11. Ms. Campbell then reviewed the 2026 reservation timeline and highlighted the following dates for travel from May 14-October 22, 2026:

- Non-transferrable Head Start: January 13-19, 2026
- Transferrable Head Start: January 20-26, 2026
- Nantucket General Opening: January 27, 2026
- Martha's Vineyard General Opening: February 3, 2026
- Telephone opening: February 10, 2026

The Reservation Office will offer extended hours of 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. every Friday-Monday from June 19-September 7, 2026, along with May 21 and 26, June 30, July 2, September 8, and October 9 and 12, 2026.

Ms. Campbell noted that customers with an account number ending in an even number will have to requalify for either the Excursion or Preferred programs to participate in Head Start.

12. Mr. Rozum then reviewed via a PowerPoint presentation the September 2025 business summary, which showed the Authority carried essentially the same number of passengers, fewer vehicles of less than twenty (20) feet (down 2.1%) and more freight trucks (up 6.8%) than it did in the same period in 2024. Year-to-date figures show the Authority has carried more passengers (up 1.9%), more vehicles of less than twenty (20) feet (up 0.2%), and more freight trucks (up 0.4%) than it did for the same period in 2024.

During September 2025, the Authority's vessels had 2,422 trips scheduled, of which zero (0) trips were canceled for mechanical reasons on the Vineyard route and two (2) trips were canceled for mechanical reasons on the Nantucket route, he said.

In September 2025, the Authority had approximately \$15,979,000 in operating income and \$13,344,000 in operating expenses, which, combined with nonoperating income and nonoperating expenses, resulted in a net operating income of \$3,452,000, which was \$480,000 less than budgeted. Year to date, the Authority has seen a net operating gain of \$17,700,000, about \$155,000 lower than budgeted.

Preliminary traffic data for October 1-21, 2025, showed the Authority carried fewer passengers (down 4.9%) and fewer vehicles of all sizes (down 2.1%) on both routes combined compared to the same period in 2024, he said, noting the nor'easter over Columbus Day was largely the cause.

Mr. Lowell asked if the "traffic" cancellations were due to trip consolidation, and Mr. Rozum said it was, and the presentation could be changed to reflect that terminology. He also noted that those cancellations were a data point when developing operating schedules as to whether or not those trips should be scheduled in the first place.

Mr. Cahill asked how many passengers had been carried year-to-date; Mr. Rozum said 2,527,848 combined on both routes through the third week of October. Mr. Cahill asked what the revenue from those passengers was, and Mr. Rozum said he would send him that number.

13. Mr. Rozum reviewed the requested renewal of the transportation agreement with the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School District, which provides a fixed-price contract for school-approved travel. Staff is recommending a three-year agreement that adjusts the fixed price to \$45,000, \$50,000, and \$55,000 in years one, two, and three, respectively, of the contract. Those costs approximate the fifty percent (50%) discount given to the island schools, including those on Nantucket.

Mr. Lowell noted it was easier for the districts and that it was like scooping dog food out of a really big bag because you can't necessarily keep track of every cup.

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

14. Mr. Rozum noted through September the average revenue from Vineyard passengers was \$8.78 compared to \$8.35 last year. The average revenue on the Nantucket run was \$27.96 due to the fast ferry rates, and the blended average for both routes was \$12.21 per passenger compared to \$11.55 last year. Mr. Cahill noted that it seemed the advertising was working.
15. Mr. Sollitto asked if data on the competing ferry lines could be presented. Mr. Rozum noted it was in the larger business summary information, and that a year-end review could be done.
16. Mr. Amundsen noted the transfer bridge replacement project was beginning on Nantucket, and each bridge would take one week to ten (10) days to complete. The work is expected to be done before Thanksgiving, and work on the Vineyard would begin after the holiday.
17. Mr. Driscoll noted the Authority would be holding its Veterans Day promotion on the holiday, offering free passenger tickets to veterans, retired military, and active-duty military members.
18. Mr. Driscoll noted that Ms. Campbell misspoke and that those customers with even-numbered accounts must re-enroll for Excursion or Preferred programs this year.
19. Mr. Rozum noted that extra service would be offered for the Thanksgiving holiday, and the schedule would be out soon.
20. Mr. Lowell then asked several questions about the pending dry dock of the *M/V Eagle* and which vessels would be replacing it.
21. In response to Mr. Lowell's call for public comment, Beth O'Connor asked if the net income for this year would be used to pay the pending bond payment in 2026. Mr. Rozum said it was, and that the net income target each year was tied to those bond payments total.

Then, at 10:19 a.m., upon a motion from Mr. Carr and a second by Mr. Sollitto, the Port Council **voted** 5-0 to adjourn its meeting.

*A TRUE RECORD*

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Gregory R. Egan, Secretary

Documents and Exhibits Used at the Port Council's November 4, 2025, Meeting

1. Agenda for the Port Council's November 4, 2025, meeting (posted October 31, 2025).
2. Recording announcement.
3. Statement regarding remote participation.
4. Minutes of the October 14, 2025, Port Council meeting, draft dated October 31, 2025.
5. Presentation, *M/V Monomoy* Conversion at Alabama Shipyard, dated November 4, 2025.
6. Presentation, *M/V Barnstable* Unscheduled\_Dry Dock, dated November 4, 2025.
7. Presentation, Woods Hole Terminal Reconstruction Project Update, dated November 2025.
8. Staff Summary #SO-2025-10, Extending Day-of-Sailing Year-Round for the Martha's Vineyard Route, undated draft.
9. Presentation, Trip Diversions, Oak Bluffs-Vineyard Haven, dated November 4, 2025.
10. Staff Summary #RCR-2025-01, Proposed 2026 Reservation Opening Dates, dated October 31, 2025.
11. September 2025 Business Summary.
12. Presentation, September 2025 Business Summary, dated November 4, 2025.
13. Staff Summary #A-721, 2026-2028 Transportation Agreement with M.V. Regional High School District, undated draft.