

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

April 7, 2026

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

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

Port Council Members absent: Vice Chair John F. Cahill of Tisbury, Eric R. Dawicki of Fairhaven, and Robert S.C. Munier of Falmouth.

Authority Board Members present: Member Robert R. Jones of Barnstable.

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

1. Mr. Carr called the meeting to order at 9 a.m.
2. Mr. Carr announced Mr. Driscoll was making a video and audio recording of the day's meeting; Jason Graziadei (representing the *Nantucket Current*) and Louisa Hufstader (representing the *Vineyard Gazette*) stated they were making audio recordings of the meeting.

3. Mr. Carr 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. Egan and a second by Mr. Sollitto, the Port Council **voted** 4-0 to approve the minutes of the Port Council meeting on March 10, 2026.
5. Mr. Rozum then reviewed via a PowerPoint presentation the February 2026 business summary, which showed the Authority carried fewer passengers (down 11.5%), fewer vehicles of less than twenty (20) feet (down 7.5%) and fewer freight trucks (down 10.8%) than it did in the same period in 2025. Mr. Rozum noted the blizzard, and its aftermath had a considerable negative effect on the February traffic and financial figures.

During February 2026, the Authority's vessels had 1,440 trips scheduled, of which eight (8) were canceled for mechanical reasons on the Vineyard route and zero (0) were canceled for mechanical reasons on the Nantucket route, he said. Weather cancellations totaled 146 trips in February, up approximately twelve percent (12%) compared to 2025.

In February 2026, the Authority had approximately \$5,229,000 in operating income and \$11,292,000 in operating expenses, which, combined with nonoperating income and nonoperating expenses, resulted in a net operating loss of \$5,000,000, which was \$1,646,000 below budget.

Mr. Rozum noted the Authority's fuel expenses were down \$174,000, which is reflective of the trip cancellations due to the storm, but in March the Authority will receive \$300,000 back from its fuel hedging program due to the spike in costs.

Preliminary traffic data for March 1-21, 2026, showed the Authority carried fewer passengers (down 10.1%) and fewer vehicles of all sizes (down 8.9%) on both routes combined than it did in the same period in 2025.

Mr. Egan asked how many days the Authority did not run due to the storm; Mr. Rozum said some trips were missed on the Sunday of the blizzard week, all day Monday, and some trips Tuesday. He noted the storm in January was not a wind event so fewer trips were missed despite the storm. He added that municipalities in the region were working together on an application for disaster relief so some storm-related expenses could be reimbursed.

Mr. Carr asked how far into the future the Authority was hedged; Mr. Rozum said ninety-seven percent (97%) of the current year was hedged, but 2027 had open orders that had not been filled due to the high cost of the hedge premiums.

6. Mr. Lawrence shared updates on the following Engineering and Maintenance items:

- *M/V Monomoy* outfitting: The vessel has received its certificate of inspection from the U.S. Coast Guard, and the sea trials are pending the completion of final repairs to the vessel. Mr. Kryska said the intention is to get the vessel in service as soon as possible, but no later than May 14, 2026, when it is first scheduled to be in service. Following that, the Authority will complete a “hot wash” on the conversion project. He noted that, despite the costs, a new vessel in the style of the *M/V Woods Hole* would have been at least \$53 million and it likely would not be in service yet.
- *M/V Nantucket* dry dock: under way at Thames River Shipyard. The vessel returned to the water the day prior to the meeting, and the rest of the work items are being completed pierside. The critical-path items are repairs to the bow and stern doors. The total project cost is \$1,666,683.25.
- Vineyard Haven Terminal underdeck concrete repairs: ninety-two percent (92%) of the demolition work repairs have been addressed. The scheduled completion date for the project is May 6, 2026.

Regarding the *M/V Nantucket*, Mr. Egan asked if there were any unexpected observations of the vessel’s general health when it was pulled from the water. Mr. Lawrence said staff did an extensive steel gauging survey and there was an area on the bow that required additional steel renewals.

Mr. Sollitto asked if the costs for the vessel conversions included the purchase price, and Mr. Kryska confirmed it did.

7. Mr. Amundsen shared an update on the Woods Hole Terminal Reconstruction Project. Recent updates at the terminal building include:

- The building is construction weathertight, and exterior building finishes are nearing completion.
- The concrete for the exterior terrace, ramps, and stairs has been completed, and the installation of the exterior pavers is under way.
- The installation of mechanical, electrical, plumbing and fire protection finishes is under way.
- The permanent power changeover has been completed.
- The installation of interior ceiling finishes is nearing completion.
- The installation of stone flooring and wall cladding finishes is nearing completion.
- Interior painting has begun.

Recent updates at the utility building include:

- The BDA system is being completed and tested this week.
- Building commissioning is in progress and nearing completion.
- The contractor is addressing punch list items.
- Owner training is in progress.

The current project cost, including change orders, is \$37 million.

Mr. Kryska noted the traffic circulation study was still in process, and staff had recently met with the Town of Falmouth Department of Public Works and Select Board. The Authority and town officials have to discuss how the two (2) entities can best work together on traffic issues around the terminal, he said. He added that he would meet with the town's Bike and Pedestrian Committee and businesspeople in Woods Hole soon as well.

Mr. Kryska said a “hot wash” would be completed on this project as well, which Mr. Carr said would be helpful to help everyone understand the history of the project.

8. Mr. Amundsen then provided an update on the True North Initiative and the reservation system replacement project. He noted recent meetings with town and island residents had been “fantastic” and that the project team was working through the solution design process. Upcoming work will include refining and approving the solution design, additional public engagement ahead of the Phase 2 policy vote, and sharing the procurement plan with the Board and Port Council.

Mr. Carr noted that, at the recent IT Executive Steering Committee, the project team spoke of delays and trying to truncate the time period for the remaining work to stay on task.

Mr. Kryska said the red items in the timeline were “alarming” but a recent visit by Ms. Fletcher and floating agent Wendy Botelho to Italy helped progress the project.

Mr. Amundsen noted that the change policy, gift cards, and no-show policy had been the bulk of the discussion at recent in-person meetings, and virtual meetings were planned for later in the month. Mr. Sollitto said he wished more people had attended the meetings.

Messrs. Egan and Sollitto said they applauded staff for having the forums.

9. Emily Uselton from Raftelis appeared virtually to provide an update on the Authority's Strategic Plan implementation. Highlights of the year included:
  - Revisited initiatives from the original strategic plan for relevance and prioritization.
  - Developed real-time, online performance dashboard.
  - Leadership transition support.

Ms. Uselton then reviewed the progress to date of the Strategic Outcome Areas and the active initiatives within each.

**Enhance, Maintain, and Green Our Infrastructure and Assets: 30% complete**

Active Initiatives and Progress

- Develop a plan to meet Massachusetts state emissions reduction goals: 50%
- Establish design criteria for new vessel acquisition: 0%
- Implement terminal upgrades in Nantucket and Vineyard Haven: 0%

**Provide Safe, Reliable Service:** 8% complete

Active Initiatives and Progress

- Leverage the standardization of vessels to increase operational efficiencies: 33%
- Conduct needs assessment for shoreside assets: 0%

**Invest in Our Employees:** 96% complete

Active Initiatives and Progress

- Create a comprehensive organization-wide onboarding process that includes Steamship 101 for all new employees: 100%
- Create an employee portal/intranet: 92%
- Identify opportunities that increase staff engagement in decision-making: 0%

**Engage with Our Communities:** 46% complete

Active Initiatives and Progress

- Develop a plan to replace the reservation system: 82%
- Implement a new reservation system: 30%
- Create a community engagement plan for each port community that focuses on unique priorities and integrates with the annual communications plan: 63%

**Ensure Financial Sustainability:** 75% complete

Active Initiatives and Progress

- Establish a multi-year financial forecast incorporating long-term capital plan impact for
- operating budget development: 60%
- Identify technology investments that create efficiencies: 67%

Mr. Lowell thanked Ms. Uselton for her hard work on keeping the Authority’s plan aligned with its operations.

Mr. Carr noted two (2) Strategic Outcome Areas—Enhance, Maintain, and Green Our Infrastructure and Assets and Provide Safe, Reliable Service—had undergone restructuring, which is why they appear to be outliers. He said a lot of good news was contained in this update. He added that, in some cases, being below target on the key performance indicators was a good thing.

10. Mr. Driscoll then noted that the annual preseason sale on electronic high-speed ticket books was running through April 11, 2026.
11. Mr. Driscoll noted that the Authority would be hosting a multiagency emergency response drill at the Oak Bluffs Terminal on April 8, 2026, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The event would begin with a loud bang, and the exercise participants are working with local authorities to alert residents that it is a drill and not an actual emergency.
12. Mr. Kryska then presented a Fleet Disposition Analysis and review of the *M/V Governor*, *M/V Sankaty*, and *M/V Nantucket*. After reviewing the annual cost to retain each vessel, the remaining useful life of each vessel, the risks of reducing the Authority to a single spare vessel, and a comparison of each vessel's service efficiency, the recommendation remains to dispose of the *M/V Governor* due to its route and weather limitations and its advanced age.

Mr. Carr said it had seemed like a clear decision to him when this matter was presented last month.

Mr. Egan asked why the decision about disposal had to be made now; Mr. Amundsen said with the *M/V Monomoy* coming online, keeping the vessel would further displace the Authority's ability to berth and maintain the vessels.

Mr. Sollitto said the Vineyard reps were getting a lot of feedback about the *M/V Governor's* potential sale, but asked how much it would really be a problem to berth it at the Fairhaven Vessel Maintenance Facility. Mr. Amundsen said the *M/V Governor* had to be berthed at Fairhaven Shipyard all winter and would also need berthing during the fall and spring repair seasons, which is when the three (3) berths at Fairhaven are fully utilized.

Mr. Kryska noted the vessel would not go away immediately as it would take a while to market and sell the vessel.

Mr. Lowell said the discussion reminded him of when the *M/V Island Home* came online, and the *M/V Islander* was sold. He asked if there was a way to use the *M/V Governor* during the shoulder season in an effective manner.

Mr. Carr asked if increasing the utilization of a nearly 75-year-old vessel would just incur more maintenance costs and potentially more unreliability if its utility was increased.

Mr. Amundsen noted the vessel's steering system was simplistic, but no spare parts would be available if it were to break. A day could easily come where the vessel would just break and not be able to move. The system is an engineering marvel until there's a bad day and no spare parts are available, he said.

Mr. Sollitto asked how many trips the *M/V Governor* missed due to mechanical issues last year; Mr. Amundsen said it was low but that's because its utilization was low.

Ms. Fletcher said the *M/V Governor* could see more utilization if the Authority got back to the volume of traffic it saw pre-COVID when the Vineyard had a five-boat schedule in the summer, but until then it's hard to see a regular use for the vessel.

Mr. Egan noted it was a cushion for the Authority that it would not be able to replace for the amount of money the sale would garner. He said it would be nice to hold on to her, noting that the vessel was in service this week on the Vineyard route.

Following discussion, Mr. Kryska said he would get input from the Board on the vessel's future and return to the Port Council for discussion.

13. In response to Mr. Carr's call for public comment, Amy Cody noted that the business summary did not have a category for "unforeseen circumstances" and asked where those were reported. Mr. Rozum said they were typically found under the "traffic" category and a footnote could be added to the presentation to that effect.

Ms. Cody noted Mr. Kryska had spoken of staging plans for summer traffic in Woods Hole and asked if that would be at an off-site parking lot. Mr. Kryska said that evaluation was still underway.

Ms. Cody asked why the \$9 million for landscaping at the terminal was not showing up on the budget sheet. Mr. Amundsen said it was not part of this phase of the project.

Ms. Cody asked when the 2027 Operating Schedule draft would be released; Mr. Kryska said it was planned for May.

14. Beth O'Connor asked, if the building was opening in May, does that mean it can be used without landscaping. Mr. Driscoll noted that "landscaping" was a small part of the next phase, which would include installing the solar canopies, demolishing the temporary terminal building, and constructing Cahoon Park.

Ms. O'Connor asked when the procurement plan for the reservation system would be available; Mr. Rozum said changes were requested following the last IT Executive Steering Committee meeting, so it would be presented at the next meeting before being brought to the Port Council and Board for review.

15. Nat Trumbull said the exhaust from the *M/V Island Home* was "as bad as (he) has ever seen it" and asked if biofuel was currently being used; Mr. Amundsen said it was not. Mr. Trumbull said he thought assurances had been made that funds would be available for its

use and said this just strengthened their resolve for air monitoring at each of the ports. Mr. Kryska said he would check on the matter.

Then, at 10:44 a.m., upon a motion from Mr. Egan and a second by Mr. Sollitto, the Port Council **voted** 4-0 to adjourn its meeting.

*A TRUE RECORD*

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Joseph E. Sollitto Jr., Secretary

Documents and Exhibits Used at the Port Council’s April 7, 2026, Meeting

1. Agenda for the Port Council’s April 7, 2026, meeting, posted April 3, 2026.
2. Recording announcement.
3. Statement regarding remote participation.
4. Minutes of the March 10, 2026, Port Council meeting, draft dated April 1, 2026.
5. Presentation, Business Summary, February 2026, dated April 6, 2026.
6. February 2026 Business Summary.
7. Presentation, Engineering and Maintenance Updates, dated April 7, 2026.
8. Presentation, Woods Hole Terminal Reconstruction Project, dated April 2026.
9. Presentation, True North, dated April 2026.
10. Presentation, Strategic Plan Implementation Update, dated April 2026.
11. Presentation, Flight Disposition Analysis, dated April 2026.