

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

August 4, 2026

Second-floor meeting room
SSA Hyannis Terminal
141 School Street
Hyannis, Massachusetts

Port Council Members present: Chair Gordon M. Carr of New Bedford; Vice Chair John F. Cahill of Tisbury; Secretary Joseph E. Sollitto Jr. of Oak Bluffs, and members Gregory R. Egan of Barnstable (who arrived at 9:09 a.m.), Robert S.C. Munier of Falmouth, and Nathaniel E. Lowell of Nantucket. Messrs. Cahill, Lowell, and Munier participated via Zoom videoconferencing.

Port Council Members absent: Eric R. Dawicki of Fairhaven.

Authority Board Members present: Chair Peter J. Jeffrey of Falmouth and Member Robert R. Jones of Barnstable. Mr. Jeffrey observed the meeting via Zoom.

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 Human Resources Janice L. Kennefick; Director of Engineering and Maintenance Zachary A. Lawrence (who appeared via Zoom); Director of Health, Safety, Quality and Environment Bridget L. Sullivan; and HSQE intern Joseph Gedraitis.

1. Mr. Carr called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Mr. Carr announced Mr. Driscoll was making a video and audio recording of the day's meeting; Louisa Hufstader (representing the *Vineyard Gazette*) and Vineyard Transit Authority Administrator Angela Gompert stated they were making audio recordings of the meeting. At 9:12 a.m., Eunki Seonwoo (representing the *Martha's Vineyard Times*) indicated to Mr. Driscoll he was making an audio recording.
3. Mr. Carr announced that, pursuant to Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, as amended, some 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. Cahill, the Port Council **voted** 5-0 to approve the minutes of the Port Council meeting on July 7, 2026.
5. Mr. Rozum then reviewed via a PowerPoint presentation the June 2026 business summary. In June, the Authority carried fewer passengers (down 1.8%), fewer vehicles of less than twenty (20) feet (down 0.6%) and more freight trucks (up 3.6%) than it did in the same period in 2025. Year-to-date, the Authority has carried fewer passengers (down 4.5%), fewer vehicles of less than twenty (20) feet (down 1.9%), and fewer freight trucks (down 2.3%) than it did in the same period in 2025.

In June 2026, the Authority had 2,466 trips scheduled, of which ten (10) were canceled for mechanical reasons, eight (8) were canceled for weather, and five (5) were canceled due to low traffic, while five (5) unscheduled trips were added. The number of diversions from Oak Bluffs to Vineyard Haven through June was sixty (60), compared to seventy-seven (77) for the same period in 2025.

In June 2026, the Authority had approximately \$19,021,000 in operating income and \$13,923,000 in operating expenses, which, combined with nonoperating income and nonoperating expenses, resulted in a net operating income of \$5,235,000, which was \$64,000 below budget.

Mr. Rozum noted that fuel costs were budgeted at \$2.843/gallon compared to an actual cost of \$2.847 a gallon, but year-to-date costs were down due to a combination of fewer miles and increased efficiency than forecast.

Mr. Rozum noted that advanced bookings for August through October 15 were up 1.5% on the Vineyard route and 2.7% on the Nantucket route for reservations and up 2.1% and 2.9%, respectively, for deck space.

Traffic for the first three (3) weeks of July 2026 showed passenger traffic was down 1.8% and vehicle traffic was down 1.2% on both routes.

Mr. Cahill asked what the Authority's total revenue was through June 2026 compared to last year; Mr. Rozum said total revenue was \$63.8 million this year compared to \$61.5 million last year. Mr. Cahill asked if that could be broken down by route; Mr. Rozum said he could provide that at next month's meeting.

Mr. Munier asked how long the Authority could keep expenses down if revenues are less than projected, adding that this seems to be a consistent trend. Mr. Rozum said it's "a real number" and that there's no reason for June and July to be down. He said fewer people are traveling, and it will have an effect on the upcoming budget projections.

Mr. Sollitto asked if it could be related to the cost of gas; Mr. Rozum said traffic on the Nantucket route was higher. He added that, although it may seem busy, small changes over time add up.

Mr. Lowell said the Authority should be "killing it" on parking, and Mr. Rozum said parking was down on boat routes. Mr. Lowell said he would like to see the year-round numbers separated because more permits should be sold. Mr. Rozum said a lot of cars are already on the island and remain there.

Mr. Sollitto asked how the Authority was doing against other ferry companies; Mr. Rozum said the data was in the business summary printed in the packet.

6. Ms. Sullivan presented an update on the SSA's Safety Quality Management System, or SQMS. During the May 18-21, 2026, internal audit, two (2) major nonconformities were found, along with seven (7) minor nonconformities, four (4) observations, and one (1) opportunity for improvement. Since 2023, the overall number of findings stemming from internal audits has increased, but Ms. Sullivan noted this is the result of a maturing system that can now be fine-tuned for better performance. The SQMS will undergo an audit by RINA, the Authority's recognized accreditation firm, on August 31, 2026, and its ISO 9001 recertification audit is planned for this coming fall.

Mr. Munier said the overall number of findings was small, so he does not get nervous about the ups and downs, but it shows the process is good. He asked what the cadence was for external audits; Ms. Sullivan said internal audits were held annually for all ISO/ISM items, and the external audit cadence varies.

Mr. Gordon asked if an "opportunity for improvement" was essentially an item caught before it became a nonconformity, and Ms. Sullivan said those were matters of opinion of the auditor that can be a preventative step but also might be a recommendation on best practice.

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

- *M/V Barnstable* dry dock at Thames Shipyard is under way. Highlights include hull inspection and cleaning, shaft inspections, and installation of the skeg. The estimated completion date is 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* dry dock specs are on the street.
- The *M/V Iyanough* dry dock specs have been submitted to be advertised.
- The Fairhaven Transfer Bridge Replacement Project specs are under development and review.
- Staff is working with an engineering firm to develop specs for the second phase of the Vineyard Haven Terminal pier repair.

Mr. Lawrence noted that staff were working on specs for the *M/V Aquinnah* and *M/V Martha's Vineyard* dry docks in 2027 to get them issued as quickly as possible.

Mr. Egan asked if anything unexpected was found during the *M/V Barnstable* dry dock; Mr. Lawrence said a few work items from the U.S. Coast Guard, some extra steel work, and the need to clean the sewage tanks were unexpected. He said staff will take the lessons learned from this dry dock and apply them to the boilerplate work for these OSVs.

Mr. Munier noted that staff members were working to get the specifications out to potential bidders sooner to attract more submitted bids for the dry dock projects.

8. Mr. Kryska noted that some “punch-list” items with the general contractor for the Woods Hole Terminal building were still being addressed. Additionally, staff met with the Falmouth Traffic Advisory Committee about street signs and having stop signs at the terminal building replaced. He said Ms. Sullivan had already noted that opportunity, and those would be in place shortly.

Mr. Sollitto noted he saw the stop signs that morning but also a Falmouth Police Officer at the site; Mr. Kryska said staff have been working with the Falmouth Police Department and the Falmouth Traffic Advisory Committee on the best way to have the police detail assist with traffic.

Mr. Munier said there seems to be confusion as to where passengers should walk when disembarking the vessels and how to maneuver among the cars staged to load. He said the site is still a work in progress and the final flow is not in place, but it seems like there is confusion about the overall traffic pattern.

He also noted he observed the *M/V Island Home* not using the passenger bridge on a trip about three (3) weeks ago, which he said was “inefficient.” Mr. Amundsen said it was likely an isolated incident, but he would look into it.

Mr. Kryska said staff have been working on how to best arrange traffic flow and direct the traffic in and out of the terminal, and it was a matter of passengers learning new patterns and having enough personnel to direct them.

Mr. Amundsen said the next phase of the project will better demark a lot of the passenger flows, especially with the plaza on the north end of the property.

9. Mr. Amundsen then provided an update on the True North Initiative, including its recent progress and upcoming key activities. Mr. Amundsen noted three (3) areas in the status summary that were in the red: testing, the preseason portal, and customer communications and training.

Regarding testing, Mr. Amundsen said as the software has gone through its revisions, some items have been blockers that have persisted and prevented certain areas of the system from being tested. Version 1.5 has just been received from E-Dea but there is a backlog of testing still to be worked through.

Regarding the preseason portal, Mr. Colman said there are challenges between the development timeline that IntraSystems has been working on versus the E-Dea timeline. IntraSystems has put in a change request for a “sailing mode” that is not part of the E-Dea system today as well as the introduction of cargo that supports the hazardous material transport, but other than those issues and the overall timeline that component is in good shape.

Mr. Sollitto asked if the project would be on time; Mr. Colman said it’s a tight timeline and there is a lot to do. Mr. Sollitto said the public will not stand for another delay, and Mr. Colman said there are far more resources on the project now than there were in the past.

Regarding training, Mr. Amundsen said they were working on a contract agreement with a state vendor to provide training resources.

Ciro Scopano from E-Dea appeared via Zoom to discuss the work to finish the configurations and the risks that would occur with further change orders.

Regarding questions about blockers from E-Dea and the Authority, Mr. Colman said some of them can be worked around, and others are part of the data migration aspect of the project that prevents execution of the tests themselves.

Mr. Cahill asked at what point change requests need to stop being implemented; Mr. Scopano said the goal would be to stop those by the end of August.

Mr. Cahill asked, if the Authority found itself in the situation where it didn’t have a high-level of confidence in the software, would E-Dea be able to commit more resources to the project. Mr. Scopano said E-Dea is totally committed to the project, and the team needs to stay focused on the scope.

Mr. Cahill asked Mr. Scopano how the partnership with IntraSystems was working out; he said the two (2) companies were working well together.

Mr. Amundsen said he had a chance to meet with some outside vendors E-Dea has worked with in the past, including an independent testing firm that assists CalMac ferries on a regular basis, to help with the testing efforts.

Mr. Kryska said the internal leadership group has “circled the wagons” to make sure the project is on the right time. He said some of the outstanding testing items may not be critical path items, and August would be a key month for the project. He said he remains confident the project will be completed successfully.

Mr. Carr said it was encouraging that testing help would be coming, and he asked what an appropriate level of passing scores would be. Mr. Amundsen said eighty percent (80%), but the team wanted to be higher than that. Mr. Rozum said some failed items may have workarounds that would not affect launch.

Mr. Carr asked what the overall budget figure was for IntraSystems; Mr. Colman said he did not have that handy but said the work includes the preseason portal, augmenting the IT staff, and the new website. Mr. Colman asked if the Authority was confident with the work being done; Mr. Colman said he was “very confident” with IntraSystems’ work and partnership. He said they’re invested in making the overall project succeed.

Mr. Amundsen then reviewed several upcoming proposed policy changes, including account updates for all customers, a new e-bike and e-scooter policy, Accessibility Pass updates, and updates to Head Start.

Mr. Sollitto asked how the e-bikes would be stored on the freight deck; Mr. Amundsen said it was a challenge, but the crew would have to get them segregated. Mr. Carr noted it put additional onus on the crews to recognize the e-bikes and e-scooters. Mr. Kryska said this was an important policy, but it was not strictly part of the True North project.

Mr. Cahill asked if these policy changes would affect the timeline; Mr. Amundsen said they would not, but some of them had to be done regardless.

Mr. Cahill asked for a contingency plan to add resources to the project if necessary. Mr. Amundsen said that was specifically the plan for testing.

10. Mr. Kryska informed the Port Council that the Offshore Tug & Transportation LLC license agreement had been signed and provided to the members. He said the initial agreement runs through April 30, 2027, at which point both sides will review its history for a possible renewal.
11. Mr. Kryska noted that, following discussion at the July meeting, the staff was bringing several veteran-related items for consideration. First was the creation of a program offering

reduced fares to qualified veterans for passenger tickets, which would be the same discount offered to senior citizens and carry the same geographic restrictions on their eligibility. Veterans would need to submit appropriate documentation of their status to be eligible for the discount.

Then, upon a motion by Mr. Sollitto and a second by Mr. Egan, the Port Council **voted** 6-0 to recommend the matter to the Board.

12. Mr. Kryska then said staff was proposing a policy to offer priority bookings for military honor guards to ensure they get on the trips they need to provide funeral services. He said the travel was paid for by the local, state, or federal veterans' groups, so the travel would be offered at the standard fares.

Then, upon a motion by Mr. Sollitto and a second by Mr. Egan, the Port Council **voted** 6-0 to recommend the matter to the Board.

13. Mr. Rozum then reviewed a proposed agreement with the Vineyard Transit Authority (VTA) to provide a parking space at the Woods Hole Terminal and additional support for a pilot program to offer transportation to Vineyard residents who wish to connect with the Cape Cod Regional Transit Authority's Boston Hospital Transportation vehicle at the Sagamore Bridge.

Mr. Egan asked what the extent of the "chaperone" would be on the vessel; Mr. Rozum said it would be a crew member to make sure they get on the boat then get on the shuttle, as well as provide assistance onboard the vessel. These services were already offered as part of the Authority's ADA program, so it would not be a significant change.

Then, upon a motion by Mr. Sollitto and a second by Mr. Egan, the Port Council **voted** 6-0 to recommend the matter to the Board.

14. Mr. Driscoll noted that the Falmouth Road Race would be held August 16, 2026. The race was being held an hour earlier this year, so the affected trips would be different than in past years. He said the details of the effects were on the website now and customer communications would start this week.
15. Mr. Driscoll said the Oak Bluffs Fireworks were being held August 21, 2026, and diversions would be made to the last two (2) trips in and out of Oak Bluffs due to street closures.
16. In response to Mr. Carr's call for public comment, Beth O'Connor asked if any Port Council members had been on the system yet and, if so, she hoped to hear their feedback

was positive because the Beta Group had not started any testing yet. She said she felt the Beta Group was a waste of time and she hoped someone had been doing testing because, with a pending software cutoff, she wanted everyone to understand there had been no true beta testing.

Ms. O'Connor said, from her perspective, there was an element of "rolling the dice" as to the financial effects of the software regarding reservation availability and the wait list. She asked if anyone had really quantified that this change would not have a significant effect on ridership and reservation availability.

Mr. Carr asked what the plan was for the Beta Group; Mr. Amundsen said it was anticipated that they would be able to test at the next meeting. Mr. Rozum added that the goal for the new system was for what's on the boat be mirrored in the new system, so as long as that's happening it should be revenue neutral. He said the intent was for more space to be available earlier so residents would not have to "play the wait list game."

He also added there were frustrations about how the Authority deployed its workforce, citing the number of staff members at the traffic booths.

Mr. Cahill said it was worth remembering that the decision was made to go with an off-the-shelf system that was as close as possible to the current system. The basic features are in place, but it's the twenty percent (20%) of other work that's being refined now. E-Dea does millions of transactions a year, so while he said he shares some of Ms. O'Connor's concerns, he overall is not concerned.

Ms. O'Connor reiterated that one (1) hour of testing would still be considered a waste of time.

17. Margaret Hannemann asked when the load testing would happen to ensure that typical heavy summer traffic flow on the site could be handled. Mr. Colman said load testing was built into the schedule and was scheduled for September 15, with preseason load testing scheduled for October 1. He noted that load testing would be done throughout September as well.

Ms. Hanneman asked for the measure of success of the beta testing and how many users would be online; Mr. Amundsen said he would get back to her with those details.

18. Angela Gompert thanked the Port Council for accommodating the VTA's request for assistance in providing medical transportation for Vineyard residents.
19. Ms. O'Connor said she wished to reiterate how important beta testing was in addition to load testing. Mr. Cahill said the feedback from the beta group is very important, and many

little things can be changed and improved as a result. Not all of them may make the first release date, but he said overall the beta group would have more than one hour to test.

Then, at 10:57 a.m., upon a motion from Mr. Sollitto and a second by Mr. Egan, the Port Council **voted** 6-0 to adjourn its meeting.

A TRUE RECORD

Joseph E. Sollitto Jr., Secretary

Documents and Exhibits Used at the Port Council's August 4, 2026, Meeting

1. Agenda for the Port Council's August 4, 2026, meeting, posted July 31, 2026.
2. Recording announcement.
3. Statement regarding remote participation.
4. Minutes of the July 7, 2026, Port Council meeting, draft dated July 31, 2026.
5. Presentation, Business Summary, June 2026, dated August 4, 2026.
6. Presentation, Engineering and Maintenance Project Updates, dated August 4, 2026.
7. Presentation, Woods Hole Terminal Reconstruction Project, dated July 2026.
8. Presentation, True North Status Summary, dated August 4, 2026.
9. Presentation, Phase III Proposed Policy Changes, undated.
10. License Agreement with Offshore Tug & Transportation LLC and Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority, dated July 21, 2026.
11. Staff Summary #GM-815, Request for Reduced Passenger Fares for Qualified Veterans, draft dated July 31, 2026.
12. Staff Summary #GM-814, Request for Priority Bookings for Honor Guards, draft dated July 31, 2026.