

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

The Meeting in Public Session

July 29, 2022

The Members of the Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority met on July 29, 2022, beginning at 9:34 a.m. in the second-floor meeting room of the Authority's Hyannis Terminal, 141 School Street, Hyannis. All five (5) Members were present and participated via Zoom videoconferencing: Chair Moira E. Tierney of New Bedford; Vice Chair Robert F. Ranney of Nantucket; Secretary Robert R. Jones of Barnstable; James M. Malkin of Dukes County; and Peter J. Jeffrey of Falmouth.

Port Council Chairman John F. Cahill of Tisbury and member Joseph E. Sollitto of Oak Bluffs were present via Zoom. The following members of management were present: General Manager Robert B. Davis; General Counsel Terence G. Kenneally; Treasurer/Comptroller Mark K. Rozum; Communications Director Sean F. Driscoll (who participated via Zoom); and Director of Human Resources Janice L. Kennefick.

Video and Audio Recording of Today's Meeting:

Ms. Tierney announced Mr. Driscoll was making an audio and video recording of the meeting; Rich Saltzberg (representing the *Martha's Vineyard Times*) indicated he was making an audio recording of the meeting.

Remote Access to the Meeting:

Ms. Tierney announced, pursuant to Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 and in line with social distancing guidelines followed during the COVID-19 pandemic, all members of the public were participating remotely in the meeting via the Zoom videoconferencing app as an adequate, alternative means of public access occurring in real time.

Annual Performance Evaluation of the General Manager:

Ms. Kennefick invited the Members to share their evaluations of Mr. Davis.

Mr. Jeffrey said he has been quite impressed overall with Mr. Davis' commitment to the Authority and his institutional knowledge. Mr. Davis has been "completely available" to him for information and made his introduction to the Board and the Authority an easy one in terms of getting up to speed. Mr. Jeffrey noted he had conferred with his predecessor, Kathryn Wilson, in preparing his evaluation.

Mr. Jeffrey said that Mr. Davis' effectiveness is a reflection of the Board's effectiveness as well. He said Mr. Davis, and the Authority, need to work on collaboration more, as there is a negative public perception and recent increased legislative scrutiny of the Authority.

He said Mr. Davis needs to look at the Authority more strategically and that the adoption of the chief operating officer position will hopefully free up his time. He said Mr. Davis takes on too much and that if he can prioritize strategic planning, that will help improve the Authority. He said he was disappointed that, four (4) years after the beginning of the HMS report, the implementation of the strategic plan still had not commenced. Mr. Jeffrey said he gave Mr. Davis an 85% overall.

Mr. Malkin said much of what Mr. Jeffrey said he endorses, and said Mr. Davis' work ethic, detailed knowledge, hours worked, involvement and communication with the Board have been exceptional. He said he is concerned about Mr. Davis' workload but he also has yet to experience a time where he did not have the answer to a question or get it in a very short period of time.

Mr. Malkin said where he saw room for improvement is in areas of communications and marketing communications, where the Authority needs to be more proactive in getting news out that is positive and to keep people informed so that they can respond with facts to negative and misleading items.

Mr. Malkin said the Authority also needs to focus more on communication with the terminals and between vessels and the terminals so that customers get the same messaging whether they are on the dock or a vessel. He said he hopes the new website will help tremendously with improving communication.

Mr. Malkin said Mr. Davis needs to delegate more and be more strategic and less "in the weeds" on a day-to-day basis.

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Overall, Mr. Malkin said he gave Mr. Davis a 90%.

Mr. Jones said Mr. Davis was handed a contentious environment when he became general manager, but he has handled the environment very well. He reviewed several of the challenges Mr. Davis has faced in his tenure but said he has handled them very well and “the boats continued to run.” Overall, he gave Mr. Davis a 92%.

Ms. Tierney said it was a sign of a good manager when you can disagree with someone and still work effectively together, as she and Mr. Davis have done. Ms. Tierney said Mr. Davis has been “unflappable” in his tenure with the Authority and has been available to the Board and the Authority twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven days a week. He’s well-respected and has access to many resources because of the relationships he has built during his long tenure with the Authority.

Ms. Tierney noted she agreed with the other Members who said they wanted Mr. Davis to delegate more. Overall, she gave Mr. Davis a 95% and said the Authority is very lucky to have him.

Mr. Ranney said he does not know if he could have summarized his views on Mr. Davis better than the Members already had. Mr. Ranney said he did not think that everyone saw the strategic planning that already goes on at the Authority in the background. Mr. Davis’ hands-on attitude is a positive because he has the Authority’s operations under control. There is always room for improvement, he said, but both he and the Authority have had the benefits of Mr. Davis’ leadership. He said he gave him a 96% overall.

Mr. Cahill summarized the Port Council’s evaluation and said it largely echoed what the Members had already said.

Mr. Davis said he appreciated all the kind comments and that they are a testament to the work the staff and frontline people do day in, day out. He said he and the Authority are only as successful as they are, and that he would continue to strive toward improvement on the items mentioned today.

Mr. Kenneally thanked Ms. Kennefick for the evaluation’s new format and said it was much improved.

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Public Comment:

Mr. Saltzberg asked if Mr. Davis had a comment on the recent petition for a late-night boat to help restaurant and service workers commute from the Vineyard. Mr. Davis said staff would look at that as they review the proposed 2023 Summer and Fall Operating Schedules for the Vineyard route. He noted that occupancy drops dramatically for trips later in the day, but that the issue would be examined.

At 10:11 a.m., Ms. Tierney entertained a motion to go into executive session to review the Authority's strategy with respect to contract negotiations with nonunion personnel because a public discussion of these matters may have a detrimental effect on the Authority's negotiating and bargaining positions. These matters include the Authority's employment contract with its general manager, Robert B. Davis. Ms. Tierney said the public disclosure of any more information with respect to these matters would compromise the purposes for which the executive session is being called. After the conclusion of the executive session, Ms. Tierney said the Board would reconvene in public.

IT WAS VOTED – upon a motion by Mr. Malkin, seconded by Mr. Jeffrey – to enter into executive session to discuss contract negotiations with nonunion personnel because a public discussion of this matter may have a detrimental effect on the Authority's negotiating and bargaining positions.

<u>VOTING</u>	<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>
Ms. Tierney	10 %	
Mr. Ranney	35 %	
Mr. Jones	10 %	
Mr. Malkin	35 %	
Mr. Jeffrey	10 %	
 TOTAL	 100 %	 0 %

The Board Reconvenes in Public Session:

At 11:25 a.m., the Board reconvened in public session. All five (5) members were present and participated via Zoom videoconferencing. The following members of management were present: General Manager Robert B. Davis; General Counsel Terence G. Kenneally; Treasurer/Comptroller Mark K. Rozum;

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Communications Director Sean F. Driscoll (who participated via Zoom); and Director of Human Resources Janice L. Kennefick.

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The Authority's Employment Contract
With its General Manager, Robert B. Davis:

IT WAS VOTED – upon a motion by Mr. Ranney, seconded by Mr. Malkin – to extend the employment contract of Mr. Davis by a term of three (3) years at an initial salary of \$207,500, with the potential of bonuses for satisfactory progress of the Woods Hole Terminal Reconstruction Project, the vessel replacement program, the Authority's new website and mobile application, and other milestones as the Board deems necessary.

<u>VOTING</u>	<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>
Ms. Tierney	10 %	
Mr. Ranney	35 %	
Mr. Jones	10 %	
Mr. Malkin	35 %	
Mr. Jeffrey	10 %	
TOTAL	100 %	0 %

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Public Comment:

Mr. Saltzberg asked what Mr. Davis' current salary was; Mr. Kenneally said it was \$186,640 per year.

At 11:30 a.m., Ms. Tierney said she would accept a motion to adjourn.

**IT WAS VOTED – upon a motion by Mr. Jones, seconded by
Mr. Malkin – to adjourn the meeting in public session.**

<u>VOTING</u>	<u>AYE</u>	<u>NAY</u>
Ms. Tierney	10 %	
Mr. Ranney	35 %	
Mr. Jones	10 %	
Mr. Malkin	35 %	
Mr. Jeffrey	10 %	
 TOTAL	 100 %	 0 %

A TRUE RECORD

ROBERT R. JONES, Board Secretary

**Documents and Exhibits Used at the
July 29, 2022, Meeting in Public Session of the
Woods Hole, Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket Steamship Authority**

1. July 29, 2022, Meeting Agenda, posted July 27, 2022.
2. Video and audio recording announcement.
3. Statement regarding remote access to the meeting.
4. Statement to be read prior to going into executive session.