

MINUTES
OF THE
IT EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE
OF THE
WOODS HOLE, MARTHA'S VINEYARD AND NANTUCKET STEAMSHIP AUTHORITY
VIRTUAL MEETING ONLY

February 27, 2026

Attendees (in person):

- Peter Jeffrey (subcommittee member)
- John Cahill (subcommittee member)
- Alex Kryska
- Mark Amundsen
- Mark Rozum
- Sean Driscoll

Attendees (virtual):

- Rob Ranney (subcommittee member)
- Gordon Carr (subcommittee member)
- Tom Innis
- Ourania Siabanis
- Lizzy Freeman (minute-taker)

Video and Audio Recording of Today's Meeting:

- It was announced that the Steamship Authority was making an audio and video recording of the meeting.

Statement Regarding Remote Participation:

- It was announced that, pursuant to Section 20 of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, as amended, Rob Ranney and Gordon Carr are participating in the meeting remotely because their physical presence would be unreasonably difficult. All IT Steering Committee members participating in the meeting by Zoom videoconferencing app and all members will be clearly audible to each other.
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1. Public Comment

- None
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2. Minutes

- It was voted upon a motion by role call vote to approve the motion to approve the September 22 IT Executive Steering Committee minutes, meeting in public session.
 - It was voted upon a motion by role call vote to approve the motion to approve the October 20 IT Executive Steering Committee minutes, meeting in public session.
 - It was voted upon a motion by role call vote to approve the motion to approve the November 17 IT Executive Steering Committee minutes, meeting in public session.
 - It was voted upon a motion by role call vote to approve the motion to approve the January 30 IT Executive Steering Committee minutes, meeting in public session.
 - John made a motion to table approval of the January 15 minutes until the next meeting. With no further discussion, the motion passed and the minutes were tabled to the next meeting.
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3. Project Update (Mark A)

- The team is in the final solution design and configuration phase with E-Dea, and the project remains in a yellow status due to the level of coordination required at this stage.
 - Two virtual town halls were held and were considered highly successful in engaging stakeholders and sharing project progress.
 - Upcoming actions include approving the E-Dea solution design, distributing the second round of draft policies to the Board and Port Council, and presenting the procurement plan to both groups.
 - Current challenges include limited resource capacity, unclear existing policies that require clarification, signs of change fatigue among staff, and increasing staff training needs as the project advances.
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4. Policy Review

Policy Updates (Mark A)

- Mark A reviewed the list of Phase I policy changes

- Peter asked whether policy updates will stay aligned with configuration and customization work and whether approvals are expected at the next Port Council and Board meetings. Mark A confirmed they are.
- Phase II policy updates are planned for spring 2026.
- Peter asked if policies should be approved before go live. Gordon emphasized that completing Phase I is critical.
- Peter outlined the approval path: IT Steering should make a Phase I recommendation by the end of this meeting, Port Council on March 10, and the Board decision on March 17. Mark A confirmed this timeline.
- John asked whether the project plan has bandwidth for new discovery. Mark A said yes, though the team is trying to define as much as possible upfront.
- Mark R noted that R1 includes milestones for each customization, with testing as each is released, and that Phase II policies should be ready in spring for testing.
- Peter stated that for Phase I, the team must identify whether each item can be handled through configuration or requires customization, and whether proposed policy changes trigger customization needs.
- John raised concerns about customizations that could result in significant cost.
- Mark R noted that some items, such as the waitlist, are already included in the RFR.
- Peter requested identification of which policies will require customization or change orders.
- Gordon asked whether anticipated policy changes were included in the RFR. Mark R clarified that only driver services are included.

New Deck Space (Mark A)

- Mark A explained that the new deck-space approach is a configuration change in which previous deck-space categories convert to linear feet, allowing more efficient vessel allocations and enabling more vehicles to fit within a single lane.
- Gordon asked whether the 14-foot measure is simply a calculation and confirmed that staff are not sorting vehicles by type. Mark A clarified that certain lane areas are dedicated to sedans and that height and width factors are accounted for in the calculations.
- Peter asked about progress on developing SOPs and training for shoreside terminals to ensure staff can use linear-feet data to load vessels efficiently. Mark A noted this represents a significant change-management effort compared to current practices.
- Rob raised concerns about over-packing limited terminal space and how staff will manage unpredictable vehicle arrival times, including last-minute arrivals that may

not align with predetermined lane assignments. Mark A reiterated that terminals will need to manage these variables as part of the change-management process.

Waitlist & Standby (Alex)

- Alex explained that there is a different understanding of waitlist and standby in the new system. If a rider cannot find their preferred date, they can waitlist for multiple departures within a defined window. The new system provides a set number of selectable slots (e.g., five before or five after), allowing up to five waitlist requests that work in conjunction with the standby list.
- Alex noted that the goal is to place riders as close as possible to their desired travel date within their available window.
- Peter asked whether standby is intended to address concerns about having fewer waitlist options. Alex confirmed that the combination of waitlist and standby is designed to work together.
- Alex described the new standby process: instead of using an open ticket with no guarantee of travel, riders can purchase a standby ticket for the specific day they want to travel, even on routes without current availability. Additional allocations (30-day, 7-day, and 1-day) open closer to departure for travelers needing flexibility.
- Peter asked whether this approach helps the team better understand daily demand. Alex confirmed it does and reduces placeholder bookings.
- Sean explained how standby and waitlist interact: a rider wanting to travel on the 14th could book a standby ticket for that day and also submit waitlist requests for nearby dates. Waitlist options can be added to a standby ticket.
- Peter asked whether riders are charged only if their standby request is matched. Alex clarified that riders pay the full fare when purchasing a standby ticket, and if they do not receive a match, the fare is refunded.
- John asked whether refunds are automatic or require user action. Mark R confirmed refunds will be automatic, pending verification in the next standup.
- Gordon noted that once riders become accustomed to the new system, it will be more predictable. He asked whether riders will know their position in the waitlist hierarchy. Alex outlined the hierarchy, previously canceled trips first, then medical, excursion, preferred, and general public, and added that the team is working with E-Dea to show riders their likelihood of clearing standby using a green/yellow/red indicator.

Transferable Reservations (Mark A)

- Current rules allow 5 transferable reservations per customer, with 3 of the 5 eligible for transfer up to 30 days before sailing, and each reservation can be transferred once.
- Mark R explained that under the new system, customers will still have 5 transferable reservations, but transfers must occur immediately at the time of purchase, rather than at a later date.
- Alex confirmed transfers remain one-time only and noted the key change: requiring transfer at purchase helps curb the current black-market resale of reservations.
- Gordon asked how the public reacted during outreach sessions. Alex said there was minimal reaction, with some concern raised about rental properties.
- Peter questioned whether transfers are being used primarily for islanders' immediate family or to support the AirBnB/rental market. Alex responded that it is both.
- Mark R added that under E-Dea, reservations could technically be transferred infinitely or not at all, but the SSA will enforce the one-time transfer rule.
- Rob asked who receives the refund if a transferred reservation goes unused. Mark R clarified that refunds go to the original form of payment.

New Way to Apply (Mark A)

- The current process relies on paper or PDF applications that must be mailed or emailed to the Reservations Office, resulting in extended wait times.
- The new process will allow customers to submit applications online, while still accepting paper forms. Customers will be able to view status updates, submit drive-on/drive-off requests electronically, and experience shorter wait times along with savings on postage and printing.
- Mark R emphasized that the major benefit is improved communication, as applicants will receive direct notifications about their application status instead of waiting for email responses.
- Rob asked whether customers who change their vehicle registration mid-year after being approved for excursion will be able to manage that update online.
- Mark R responded that he believes this will be handled online but noted it will be verified.

Changes to Stacking Special Program Discounts

- Mark A: The current system allows customers to stack multiple discounts, requiring SSA staff to manually calculate each fare.

- Mark A: In the new system, customers will select a single discount (subscription) at the time of booking.
- Mark R explained that selecting a subscription upfront provides greater price transparency, as each subscription corresponds to a specific rate.
- Rob noted he was unaware of the current stacking practice and asked whether staff would alert customers if they qualify for a better discount than the one they selected.
- Mark R clarified that customers choose the subscription they want to use (e.g., excursion vs. medical), and business rules will determine eligibility.
- Rob asked whether customers lose out if they qualify for a better discount but don't know it. Mark R reiterated that eligibility is tied to the subscription selected.
- Peter compared the model to hotel pricing, where customers can see all available rates and choose among them, and asked whether the system could show all eligible fares.
- Mark R said the system includes options for rates and subscriptions.
- Peter requested to see how this would look in practice and asked whether showing all eligible fares would require configuration or customization, and whether it might trigger a change order.

Expanded Self-Service Options When Booking Driver Services (Mark A)

- The current process requires customers to receive and complete indemnification forms by email or at the port.
- In the new process, customers will be able to book online and agree to the driver services policies during booking, with required documentation still brought to the port on the day of travel.
- Customers will continue to be responsible for bringing their documentation when they arrive at the terminal.
- John noted that this requirement applies only to Nantucket and recommended that this distinction be clearly shown on the slide.

Only Passengers Who Book Multiple Medical Reservations Can Delay Payment

- The current system allows customers to delay payment for five days after booking.
- In the new system, customers must pay at the time of booking, except when making multiple medical reservations at once.
- This change is intended to reduce cancellations, ensure SSA receives payment upfront, and still preserve flexibility for customers facing medical-related financial strain.
- Mark R clarified that payment delays are only allowed when booking in person or by phone.

- Gordon questioned why customers can delay payment for five medical reservations but not two.
- Mark R explained the intent is to support customers experiencing significant medical hardship, allowing them to secure inventory without immediate payment.
- Gordon noted he had not realized the prior system experienced high medical-reservation cancellation rates.
- Rob added that many cancellations are weather-related, such as Boston medical appointments scheduled during storms.
- Angela (Reservations Office) emphasized that the medical program aims to ease the burden on customers by allowing advance booking and delayed payment, especially for recurring treatments like chemo, where upfront costs can be substantial. She noted this flexibility is not a policy change, cannot be done online, and is based on individual circumstances, often involving 4–8 reservations, though sometimes fewer.
- Rob observed that many customers are unaware of this flexibility and would benefit from clearer communication.
- Angela said the process is explained when customers enter the medical program, and that booking early helps avoid displacing others later.
- Rob asked whom customers should speak with at the terminal.
- Angela confirmed that all medical appointments must be handled through Reservations Office supervisors.

Cancellation Fee Instead of Deposit for Charge Accounts (Mark A)

- The current process requires a 10% preseason deposit, with complex rules governing refunds or penalties for in-season cancellations.
- In the new process, the deposit is eliminated and replaced with a cancellation fee, which is still being finalized with the shippers.
- Key benefits include no upfront deposit for shippers and a simpler, more predictable process.
- Some cancellation-fee functions are not supported in the E-Dea system, prompting the shift away from the deposit model.

Simplifying the Preseason Lottery Process (Mark A)

- The current process uses one deadline plus five additional deadline days, with a separate lottery for each day.
- The new process will move to one single deadline and one single lottery.

- The change makes the system simpler and fairer, but reduces the buffer for shippers who miss the deadline and increases the operational burden on SSA to ensure deadlines are met.

Policy Phase II Timeline (Mark A)

- Policies will be refined based on public engagement and feedback, then updated accordingly to support R1 system acceptance.
- Engagement activities include town halls, shipper meetings, and the kickoff of user group sessions.
- Phase II policies will require approval from IT Steering, the Port Council, and the Board.

Next Steps

- Board to vote on Policy Phase I
 - Finalize solution design based on policy changes (project team)
 - Schedule next round of public engagement sessions (project team)
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5. Public Comment

- Margaret Hannemann raised concerns about choosing between waitlist and standby without knowing the odds of success. She suggested showing a green/yellow/red indicator or percentage likelihood across all available ferries before selecting, noting it would help riders decide whether to aim for an earlier or preferred trip. She added that while she doesn't transfer or rent out reservations herself, many people don't know who will ultimately be booking on their behalf, especially in rental situations.
 - Angela Campbell (SSA) explained that although agencies no longer "camp out" at the airport, many island residents still sell their reservations to businesses on the island. Agencies and hotels have historically submitted reservations on behalf of residents. She emphasized that the new process will level the playing field, benefiting both residents and visitors by improving access to reservations.
 - Margaret Hannemann responded that if reservation selling is as widespread as described, then the SSA is right to limit transfers to one per reservation, noting that people do hear about tickets being bought and sold elsewhere.
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Motion to Recommend Phase I Policies to the Port Council and Board:

- It was voted by roll call to approve the motion to recommend Phase I policies to the Port Council and Board, meeting in public session.

Motion to Adjourn:

- It was voted by roll call to approve the motion to adjourn of the IT Executive Steering Committee, meeting in public session.

Meeting Duration

2:00 pm – 3:20 pm

Documents Distributed:

- February 27, 2026, IT Executive Steering Committee Meeting - Presentation

Next Meeting:

- Date: March 9, 2026
- Time: 2 pm
- Location: Virtual Only

Action Items:

Action Item	Owner	Due Date
Share the procurement plan with IT Steering, Port Council, and Board	Project team	Next meeting
Schedule town halls	Project team	Next meeting
Identify for each policy whether it requires configuration or customization; flag any that may trigger change orders or significant cost	Project team	Next Port Council meeting
Confirm which policy changes are already included in the RFR (e.g., waitlist, driver services)	Project team	Next Port Council meeting
Validate the medication-reservation payment-delay process and document business rules for when payment can be deferred	Project team	Next Port Council meeting
Finalize cancellation-fee structure to replace the preseason deposit model	Project team	Two meetings from now

Confirm automatic refund functionality for unmatched standby tickets	Project team	Two meetings from now
Define and publish the waitlist hierarchy	Project team	Two meetings from now
Develop clear customer-facing guidance on when to use standby vs. waitlist	Project team	Before R1 launch
Ensure slides for Port Council and Board note that driver services applies only to Nantucket	Project team	Next Port Council meeting
Distribute presentation to Port Council members	Project team	Next Port Council meeting