MINUTES

OF THE

IT EXECUTIVE STEERING COMMITTEE

OF THE

WOODS HOLE, MARTHA'S VINEYARD AND NANTUCKET STEAMSHIP AUTHORITY

April 25, 2025

First Floor Conference Room

Steamship Authority Headquarters

228 Palmer Avenue, Falmouth, MA

Attendees (in-person):

- Peter Jeffrey (subcommittee member)
- Mark Rozum
- Stephen Colman
- Mark Amundsen
- Ian Nichols
- Peggy Nickerson
- Tom Innis
- Ourania Siabanis
- Lizzy Freeman (minute-taker)

Attendees (virtual):

- John Cahill (subcommittee member)

Not in attendance:

- Eric Dawicki (subcommittee member)

Video and Audio Recording of Today's Meeting:

- It was announced that Mr. Nichols and Falmouth Community Television were 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, Mr. Cahill was participating in the meeting remotely because his physical presence would be unreasonably difficult. Mr. Cahill was participating in the meeting by Zoom videoconferencing app and all members will be clearly audible to each other.

1. Public Comment

- **Amy Cody** inquired about the frequency of updates on the reservation system project.
    - *Response:* Monthly reporting to the Board is planned. A Project Steering Committee will convene between Port Council and Board meetings to provide updates to both bodies.
- Ms. Cody also asked if meeting minutes would be posted after each session.
    - *Response:* Yes, minutes will be made available following each meeting.

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2. RFR Evaluation Updates

- The Request for Response (RFR) timeline remains on schedule.
- Nine vendors were evaluated based on:
    - **Business Response:** Qualitative aspects of the bidder's profile.
    - **Functional Response:** 640 requirements covering trip management, commercial customers, etc.
    - **Technical Response:** 99 technical requirements including SLAs and uptime commitments.
- Four vendors were selected to proceed to the demonstration phase, each rated as Highly Advantageous or More Advantageous.
- The evaluation committee comprised:
    - Mark Amundsen (COO)
    - Mark Rozum (Treasurer/Comptroller)
    - Alison Fletcher (Director of Shoreside Operations)
    - Angela Campbell (Reservations and Community Relations Manager)
    - Kelly Conrad

    - Stephen Colman (Director of IT)
    - James Ashley (Senior Network Engineer/Systems)

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3. Vendor Selection Timeline

- The evaluation team will participate in vendor demonstrations during the last week of the month. Each demonstration will be a full-day session with morning demos and afternoon Q&A.
- Following demonstrations:
    - Proposals will be re-ranked.
    - Financial proposals will be opened.
    - Vendors will be asked to submit a Best & Final Offer (BAFO).
    - Final review and ranking will be completed by the evaluation team.
- The selected vendor will be recommended to the General Manager and Board at the May Board meeting.
- Implementation plans:
    - Kickoff is planned for June.
    - A 6–7 month configuration period will follow.
    - Testing and full implementation are scheduled, with a goal of full rollout by October 2026 and potential phased implementation starting Spring 2026.
- The decision will be based on best value, not necessarily the lowest cost.
- SSA and vendors have exchanged implementation timelines; final alignment will occur during contracting.
- The vendor is expected to guide implementation using their expertise.
- The reservation system is part of a broader transformation across SSA, requiring alignment of operational and infrastructure processes.

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4. Infrastructure Assessment

- Infrastructure must support the new reservation system.

- Preliminary findings provide initial direction; final findings are expected next month.
- Microsoft Azure is currently used for system access and assessed as low risk.
- Application dependency issues (identified in the prior Technology Assessment) remain a concern; the current suite is not meeting SSA needs.
- A full network infrastructure overhaul is likely necessary (e.g., outdated wiring and equipment at terminals).
- A vendor is assisting in identifying additional risks through a risk program review.
- IT has been proactively involved in new terminal construction (e.g., WH Terminal); this will be a standard moving forward.
- Expectation to replace significant portions of existing technology.
- A full-time project manager will be responsible for ensuring continued tech maintenance.
- Wired vs. wireless infrastructure needs will be explored.

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5. Commercial Portal Allocations Project

- Progress is to be made prior to full vendor kickoff.
- The project focuses on reworking both systems and operations.
- Freight transportation is unique and essential for the islands (groceries, fuel in; trash out).
- Commercial reservations are primarily made before public bookings to ensure essential goods can be transported.
- The current system is paper-based and manual; this effort seeks to modernize and increase efficiency.
- The new portal will include:
    - Interface for commercial customers.
    - Staff tools for managing bookings and allocations.
    - Enforcement of rules related to commodities, lotteries, and usage.
    - Enhanced reporting and analytics.

- The portal is being developed in C# (with supporting languages).
- MVP (Minimum Viable Product) delivery is expected by the end of April, providing basic end-to-end functionality.
- Evaluation in August will determine readiness for fall production use, potentially in parallel with the current reservation system.
- The project is informed by prior listening sessions with commercial shippers; the feedback loop continues to refine functionality.

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6. Sub-team Updates

- Sub-teams are focused on key areas: customer & terminal, commercial, accounting, and technical.
    - **Technical:** Leading infrastructure assessment with Intrasystems; preparing for data migration and testing.
    - **Commercial:** Updating preseason processes; planning engagement sessions to gather feedback on the new portal; refining policies in anticipation of vendor configuration questions.
    - **Customer Experience:** Examining policies, signage, wayfinding, and the overall end-to-end journey. The goal is to make travel seamless and intuitive for customers.
    - **Accounting:** Ensuring system integration supports internal functions and reporting needs.
- Engagement sessions are planned over the next few months.
- The next meeting will include scheduling of customer and commercial engagement sessions, with ideas including hosting listening sessions aboard ferries.
- The overall goal is to maintain continuous engagement and feedback throughout configuration and rollout.

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7. Project Management

- SSA is extending the Gibbous contract (PRF76) through June 2025.
- Terence will resume procurement activities next week.

- SSA will not go through a formal RFP, as it is using a state contract, which requires three competitive quotes from state-authorized vendors.
- Selection will be made based on quotes and submitted to the Board.

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8. Old/New Business

- **Old Business:** None (first meeting).
- **New Business:**
    - Commercial and customer engagement sessions added as a formal agenda item.
    - John raised the need to review the SSA website for suitability with the new system.

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9. Public Comment

- **Amy Cody** expressed concern about maintaining open and consistent public communication regarding the reservation system project.
    - Suggested outreach efforts such as press coverage, public demos, and listening sessions to build awareness.
    - Noted that most users won't attend meetings or follow the Board unless proactively engaged.
    - Recommended adding a communication plan to the agenda for two meetings from now.

Motion to Adjourn:

- It was voted upon a motion by Mr. Jeffery, seconded by Mr. Cahill, to approve the motion to adjourn of the IT Executive Steering Committee, meeting in public session.

Meeting Duration

1:00pm - 2:20 pm, EST

Documents Distributed:

- SSA Project Subcommittee Steering Kickoff Slides

Next Meeting:

- Date: May 20
- Time: 1:00 pm
- Location: Virtual and In Person at 228 Palmer Ave, Falmouth MA

Action Items:

Action Item	Owner	Due Date
Decide when to have commercial and customer engagement sessions	Commercial Experience Sub-team, Customer Experience Sub-team, Reservation System Internal Working Group	Next meeting
Determine whether Peter can be involved in the PMO contract process	Mark Rozum	5/2/25 EOD
Revisit website as we implement res system	All	Two meetings from now
Establish communication plan	All	Two meetings from now
Determine established meeting day/time	All	Next meeting