

**MINUTES
OF THE
LONG-RANGE VINEYARD TRANSPORTATION TASK FORCE
OF THE
WOODS HOLE, MARTHA’S VINEYARD
AND NANTUCKET STEAMSHIP AUTHORITY**

January 14, 2021

Via the Zoom Video Conferencing App
First Floor Meeting Room (Room 103)
The SSA’s Administrative Offices
228 Palmer Avenue, Falmouth, Massachusetts

<u>Task Force Member</u>	<u>Appointing Authority</u>	<u>Present/Absent</u>
Leon Brathwaite	Dukes County Commissioners	Present
Doug Brown	Falmouth Select Board	Present
John Cahill	Tisbury Select Board	Present
Keith Chatinover	Dukes County Commissioners	Present
Robert Davis	Steamship Authority	Present
Jesse Law III	Oak Bluffs Board of Selectmen	Present
Mark Rozum	Steamship Authority	Present
Michael Santoro	Oak Bluffs Board of Selectmen	Present
Douglas Sederholm	Martha’s Vineyard Commission	Present
Julian Suso	Falmouth Select Board	Present
James Vercruyse	Martha’s Vineyard Commission	Present

Also participating:

Ralph Packer, Jr.	Tisbury Towing & Transportation, Inc.
John Packer	Tisbury Towing & Transportation, Inc.
Steven Sayers	Steamship Authority

1. Mr. Sayers began the meeting at approximately 4:30 p.m. by announcing that the Steamship Authority (SSA) was making an audio and video recording of the meeting, and he asked whether anyone else was making a recording as well. Later in the meeting, *Martha’s Vineyard Times* reporter Rich Saltzberg stated in the chatbox that he also was recording the meeting.
2. Mr. Sayers then announced that, in response to Governor Baker’s executive orders concerning the necessity to conduct public meetings in line with social distancing guidelines during the current state of emergency involving the COVID-19 pandemic, all Task Force members that day were participating remotely in the meeting because their

physical attendances that day would be unreasonably difficult. Mr. Sayers also stated that all Task Force members were participating in the meeting by the Zoom video conferencing app and that all members will be clearly audible to each other.

3. The Task Force then **voted** (with Messrs. Brathwaithe, Brown, Cahill, Chatinover, Davis, Law, Rozum, Sederholm, Suso and Vercruysse voting in favor, and Mr. Santoro abstaining) to approve the minutes of the Task Force's November 19, 2020 meeting in public session.

Ralph Packer's Barge Operations and the Possibility of Barging Solid Waste Off-Island

4. Mr. Davis then welcomed Ralph Packer, Jr. and John Packer, and stated that the Task Force appreciated the fact that they were taking the time out of their busy calendars to participate in their meeting. Mr. Davis recounted how the Task Force had been created a little over a year ago to look at long-term solutions for the communities' biggest transportation needs and noted that Mr. Packer's operations had come up as part of their discussions. Therefore, Mr. Davis stated that the Task Force was hoping that Mr. Packer could talk with them regarding what his plans are going forward for the island in terms of freight and the like.
5. In response, Mr. Packer provided the Task Force with the following information:
 - Mr. Packer's operations are on Beach Road in Tisbury, and they have been in the petroleum business for a number of years and are now in the petroleum business supplying themselves. Several years ago, when coastal tankers were going out of business, they purchased a small tanker and built a small tanker barge.
 - Martha's Vineyard has grown and there are requirements for concrete, special types of stone, asphalt, heavy equipment and modular homes. Mr. Packer is very involved in moving stone products in bulk and has two barges for that purpose, one that carries 800 tons and another one that carries 1,200 tons. He also has a tank barge that he had designed and built, which was not double hulled but has gone through the double hull process and is now double hulled, approved by the United States Coast Guard, and has the capacity of carrying four different products.
 - They had been supplying a lot of product to Nantucket, but that island now has its own terminal. With respect to Martha's Vineyard, he supplies himself, which has improved his operations by allowing him to replenish his supply once a week instead of being required to have two or three weeks of inventory on hand.
 - Mr. Packer has been working out of New Bedford for a number of years. Initially it was difficult because he was using other people's docks, but he went to the City of New Bedford and acquired a piece of land. A few years later, the City took over that land and put Mr. Packer in another location at 352 Herman Melville Boulevard, which he invited the Task Force to visit and take a look at what he is doing there. The property

has 400 feet of waterfront; it has 15 feet of water at its dock; and it can accommodate several barges at one time.

- Mr. Packer has been in the product business and that business is not going to change. His family, including his son, John, and his grandsons, are going to stay in that business. They enjoy Martha's Vineyard and have some terrific people working for them.
- Martha's Vineyard has grown immensely. In 2015, Mr. Packer moved 35 modular homes to the island; in 2016, he moved 56; in 2017, he moved 63; and in 2018, he moved 76. Modular homes have become very popular and desirable, and they come in all styles and shapes. Mr. Packer is contributing to the community with these modular homes, some of which are very small cottages and others are pretty lavish.
- In addition to modular homes, Mr. Packer carries petroleum products, stone products, heavy equipment and some bulk materials. In 2015, he carried 67,000 tons of oil, stone and general products; in 2016, he carried 84,000 tons; in 2017, he carried 70,000 tons; in 2018, he carried 74,000 tons; and in 2019, he carried 130,000 tons because of the large airport job. However, in 2020, he carried less tonnage due to the pandemic.
- All of Mr. Packer's barges have been brought up to very good quality, and he also has two tugs, one of which is brand new. To make a long story short, the Packer family is going to be in business for a long time and they are going to stay in the fuel business and the bulk material business.
- Mr. Packer also has a great rapport with the SSA and he is there to do anything that will make the transportation system work. In this regard, given how many tons of material he has taken to the island by barge, even without calculating how many 30-ton dump trucks would have been required to take that material by truck, it is clear that his operations have relieved a tremendous pressure on the SSA's boats.

Mr. Packer stated that he hoped he had given the Task Force a brief description of his operations and that he would be glad to answer any questions they have.

6. In response to a question from Mr. Davis, Mr. Packer stated that the fuel oil, gasoline and diesel he transports to the island is for his own storage in Vineyard Haven. In addition, for the last two or three years, he has been fueling the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution's ships, which sometimes take 50,000 to 100,000 gallons, and he also has been working with a broker to be involved in the offshore wind farm energy movement.

In response to a question from Mr. Santoro, Mr. Packer stated, while he has lost some accounts, he probably supplies 90% of the diesel fuel on the island, 75% of the fuel oil, and somewhere between 20% and 30% of the gasoline, although it was somewhat of a guessing game due to the fact that there is competition.

7. Mr. Sederholm noted that the Tisbury Marine Terminal was before the Martha's Vineyard Commission in the pre-public hearing phase as a development of regional impact, and that he had noticed that part of the application involves adding two more barge slips, which would triple the number of barges that Mr. Packer could load or unload at one time. But Mr. Sederholm stated that, at least in the current pre-public hearing phase, the Martha's Vineyard Commission had not been given any information about what Mr. Packer's intention is in applying to build two more barge slips, and he asked Mr. Packer whether he could explain what his plan is and why he needs two more slips.

In response, Mr. Packer stated that he has been working with Vineyard Wind for four years, that he has had a letter of agreement with them for over two years, and that, while he does handle some finances for them on this design, they are very ambitious and laid out three ramps. In this regard, Mr. Packer noted that the terminal has one ramp now, which has to be expanded because the modular homes are wider. Mr. Packer further stated that he probably will end up with two ramps and that, while they put three ramps on the drawing, he doesn't think he will need three ramps and that probably two ramps will be very satisfactory.

Mr. Packer also noted that ramps are expensive to build, and that the one he has now is 30 feet long and 15 feet wide. By comparison, Mr. Packer said, the new ramp will be 40 feet long and 18 feet wide after it is built and installed, and it will match the ramp that's in New Bedford in order to accommodate modular homes that were 12 feet, then 14 feet, and are now 16 feet wide. Mr. Packer observed that this is the reason he has difficulty getting them off a barge in Vineyard Haven.

Ultimately, Mr. Packer stated that he does not think that he will be building the third ramp, and that a second ramp is desirable so that, when he has a modular home and a gravel barge, they both can be loaded at the same time.

8. Mr. Sederholm then asked Mr. Packer if he has projected whether having a second ramp at the terminal will increase the amount of cargo that he transports over the course of a year. In response, Mr. Packer cautioned that it is hard to look in the crystal ball, but that he believes the island is depending more and more on mainland supplies, especially building materials. Mr. Packer noted that there are two ready-mix plants on the island, and now an asphalt plant, and that they all need fractured bedrock that the island does not have. In addition, Mr. Packer observed that the island of Nantucket is almost exhausted of its sand and Martha's Vineyard is also importing sand. Although Mr. Packer acknowledged that Goodale does have a large amount of sand, he stated that its inventory of sand will shortly be exhausted as well and, since sand is very necessary for construction, he assumes that he will be importing more of it.

Mr. Packer also noted that Martha's Vineyard's bedrock is said to be 700 feet below the surface, and it is not even easy to find hard bedrock on the mainland. But Mr. Packer stated that, although it is getting a little scarce, he has a very good supplier and the fractured hard bedrock is very important for a good quality concrete and asphalt roadways.

9. Mr. Vercruysse then asked Mr. Packer whether he will be involved in transporting the components that Vineyard Wind will need to build its wind turbines, or whether that will be strictly Vineyard Wind's operation. In response, Mr. Packer stated that his facilities on the island would be a service depot for the turbines, with possibly two high-speed catamarans like the SeaStreak ferries that operate between New Bedford and Oak Bluffs. Mr. Packer also stated that Vineyard Wind has said that the operations will employ around 50 people on the island, including boat captains, stenographers and technicians.

In addition, Mr. Packer noted that Martha's Vineyard has the advantage in being 25 miles closer to the wind turbines than New Bedford, and that he also understands that Vineyard Wind is moving forward and making arrangements to have a helicopter at the Martha's Vineyard Airport. In this regard, Mr. Packer stated that, even though he is in the oil business, he is very much in favor of renewable energy and that it is very important to him to be associated with Vineyard Wind. Mr. Packer also observed that Vineyard Wind's boats will need deep water, which Vineyard Haven Harbor has, and that the project will eventually happen even though Vineyard Wind is going through a terrible struggle in getting permits.

But Mr. Packer stated that Vineyard Wind will probably not have any construction material on the island, and that he understands the jack-up barges that are used to build the towers are too large to go into New Bedford. In addition, Mr. Packer said, Vineyard Wind is building a US-flagged 450-foot ship in Brownsville, Texas to use for building the wind towers, and that will not be able to enter Vineyard Haven Harbor. Rather, Mr. Packer stated that Vineyard Wind is proposing to use his operation as a support to the wind turbines after they are built.

10. Mr. Vercruysse then asked Mr. Packer if the improvements that are taking place on the New Bedford waterfront will affect his operation. In response, Mr. Packer stated that the City of New Bedford is proposing to build 600 to 700 feet of dock adjacent to where his facilities are and that, while he is concerned, he has talked to New Bedford Port Authority Executive Director Edward Anthes-Washburn and Director of Engineering and Operations Cesar Duarte, and he does not think that the City will take his property. Mr. Packer noted that he has a 99-year lease with the City with 65 years to go on it if it isn't changed.

Mr. Packer also observed that he is the largest mover of product out of New Bedford in terms of both dollars and tons, so he thinks the City will respect what he is doing. Mr. Packer further stated that the City has been extremely cooperative every day he has been there, that it is very much looking for an active marine front, and that it has been very easy to work with.

11. In response to a question from Mr. Brathwaite, Mr. Packer stated that his barges are always empty when they are going from Martha's Vineyard to New Bedford, except that today he was loading 1,000 tons of John Keene's spoils that are being barged to New Bedford. But Mr. Packer stated that this instance was most unusual and that as a rule his barges go back empty to New Bedford.

Mr. Packer also noted that, while the barge business does not have a schedule where it leaves at a certain time and arrives at a certain time, it works on a schedule when it has a job to do. In this regard, Mr. Packer stated that, when a barge is loaded with a large job, he works 24 hours per day, which enables them to unload a barge a day and load a barge a day. Thus, Mr. Packer said, while he operates on a schedule, he does not have a scheduled departure or arrival.

Mr. Packer further stated that the movement of baled trash is very popular in Europe and that he worked with Mr. Davis a little bit on that. Mr. Packer noted that a bale is four feet by four feet by four feet, generally pallet size, and weighs almost a ton. Mr. Packer also observed that because it is shrink-wrapped, its shelf life is up to six months. But Mr. Packer noted that the cost of the baling equipment is expensive, somewhere in the range of \$600,000, and that the island probably would want to have two of them so that one can be working while the other one is being serviced. Nevertheless, Mr. Packer stated that moving baled trash is a possibility and probably the way the country is going, compared to how loosely trash is being handled right now. Mr. Packer also observed that the places to take trash are becoming fewer all of the time, and that baled trash can be placed on railroad cars and transported to disposal areas outside of New England.

12. In response to a question from Mr. Santoro, Mr. Packer stated that trucks are able to drive onto his barges because his Vineyard Haven terminal has a 15-foot wide transfer bridge and his New Bedford facility has a 50-foot long, 18-foot wide transfer bridge. Mr. Packer explained that, when he loads gravel, he has two trailer trucks that back on the barge and dump their gravel, and then a machine trims the barge. In this way, Mr. Packer said, he can load 1,000 to 1,200 tons of gravel in four to five hours by having them back onto the barge. Indeed, Mr. Packer noted that, at that moment, John Keene's trucks were backing onto his barge in Vineyard Haven. But Mr. Packer noted that, while he thus has a roll-on/roll-off operation, he doesn't leave the truck on a barge while the barge is in transit; rather, the truck dumps his load onto the barge and then drives off.

Mr. Santoro then asked if a truck could stay on the barge while it is in transit. In response, Mr. Packer stated that his larger barge probably could carry six or nine tractor-trailers, but that transporting them would be rather expensive because they only carry 30 tons apiece, which represents only a quarter of the barge's 1,200 capacity, which is its earning power. Nevertheless, Mr. Packer stated that he would be glad to explore that avenue.

In response to a question from Mr. Davis, Mr. Packer stated that, if he were to carry trucks on his barges, he probably would carry only their trailers, using a yard tractor in Vineyard Haven to put the trailers on the barge and another yard tractor in New Bedford to take them off the barge and put them in his storage yard. Mr. Packer noted that this operation would allow the barge to continue on its way without having to wait for tractors to arrive at his terminals to load or unload the trailers onto or off of the barge. In addition, Mr. Packer said, he does work long hours into the night, and this loading and unloading operation could be accomplished during the evening and the trailers could then be taken away during the day. In this regard, Mr. Packer estimated that his barge probably could carry nine of the trucks that are used to carry waste from the island.

13. In response to a question from Mr. Rozum, Mr. Packer stated that the transit time by his tug and barge between New Bedford and Vineyard Haven is about four hours and that, while he sometimes can make it in three hours, he allows four hours to go to New Bedford and vice versa because he has to be considerate of the tide in Woods Hole channel and considers four hours as the average time for the voyage. By comparison, Mr. Packer said, it generally takes 2-½ hours to go between New Bedford and Vineyard Haven by truck, because it is an hour's drive between Woods Hole and New Bedford, the ferry trip is almost an hour, and the truck has to arrive at the ferry one-half hour in advance.
14. In response to a question from Mr. Sayers, Mr. Packer stated that he probably would have room at his Vineyard Haven terminal to store a barge load of baled trash, assuming that he would use his smaller barge that carries 700 to 800 tons to carry the trash. Mr. Packer noted that, at his terminal, the bales could be stacked three high and possibly four high in the center, and that there would be enough room to store them between his terminal and the yard where the trash is baled. In this regard, Mr. Packer observed that baling trash is a marvelous way of handling solid waste and, while there is a big initial expense, it reduces the amount of trash as well. Accordingly, Mr. Packer said, he believes that certain landfills are going to receive baled trash.
15. In response to a question from Mr. Davis, Mr. Packer stated that his New Bedford operation has not been impacted by the fact it is located north of the New Bedford-Fairhaven bridge. Mr. Packer noted that, during the day, the bridge opens on an hourly basis at 15 minutes past each hour and then, from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., it opens on demand. Mr. Packer further stated that generally his tugs coming into New Bedford with empty barges make the bridge and, when they get to his facilities, they switch barges and go out when the bridge is next open. Accordingly, Mr. Packer stated that he has not had any great difficulty due to the bridge and that, while it has failed a couple of times in the past, he always has somehow made it through.
16. Mr. Sayers then asked Mr. Packer what types of freight he thinks his barge operation would be most productive at carrying between New Bedford and Martha's Vineyard. In response, Mr. Packer stated that he would start with the waste product, as baling it would be the most efficient way of getting it on the barge and it would then be out of sight and out of mind because it would be handled at his terminals in both Vineyard Haven and New Bedford instead of the SSA's terminals. But Mr. Packer stated he was not sure about whether it would make sense financially for him to carry general freight, as a barge service normally does not provide same-day delivery, although he stated he would put some thought to it.
17. In response to a question from Mr. Rozum, Mr. Packer stated that he thought the most efficient way of transporting baled trash would be to put four or eight tons of baled trash on a pallet at the location where it is baled, which would then allow that amount of trash to be moved on a flat-deck trailer at one time. Mr. Packer also stated that he has not considered putting trash trucks on his barges because they occupy an awful lot of area for the amount of weight they carry. But Mr. Packer noted that they could spend some time

evaluating that alternative and that John Packer, who is a civil engineer, could do a little design work.

John Packer then noted that their current barges are deep barges because they are designed for heavy cargo and bulk cargo with smaller footprints to keep them streamlined. But he stated that, if someone wanted to carry a lot of trailers on a barge, it could be done on wider, flatter barges and that they could look at that alternative and retool their operations with wider barges similar to the ones that ran to Deer Island in the 1990s to supply the construction project there.

18. In response to a question from Mr. Sederholm regarding what the financial impact would be on the SSA if all of a sudden Mr. Packer's barges were to carry these trailers, Mr. Davis noted that a number of trucks currently carrying solid waste from the island backhaul other product when they return to the island, and that he believes the study done by Tetra Tech a few years ago estimated that those trucks backhaul other product to the island more than 50% of the time. Accordingly, Mr. Davis said, those trucks might still travel on the SSA's ferries but would be leave the island empty instead of with solid waste. On the other hand, Mr. Davis noted that the SSA would also have to explore whether the freight that is being backhauled may also be shipped by bulk on barges, although he would have to get a better sense of what materials are now being backhauled.

Mr. Rozum further noted that, as Mr. Packer had mentioned earlier, the island is more of an importer of freight than an exporter. In addition, Mr. Rozum said, island residents generally travel in the opposite direction of the freight, with freight trucks traveling to the island and island residents leaving the island in the morning and then, in the afternoon and evening, everyone reversing directions.

Mr. Packer stated that he has great respect for the SSA, that he wants to work with the SSA, and that he believes that he and the SSA have had a good rapport. Accordingly, Mr. Packer stated that he thought he could start with one commodity, like the trash, and suggested that the SSA designate someone to work with John Packer to develop a solution that might work. Mr. Packer then repeated that he would like to work with the SSA and that he has great respect for the SSA and the people who work there. In addition, Mr. Packer said, he thinks his business will continue with his son and grandson and that he would like to see if something beneficial could be developed and presented at a meeting for consideration.

19. In response to a question from Mr. Santoro, Mr. Packer stated that his barges would be able to carry solid waste even while Vineyard Wind's construction project takes place, because that construction work has been planned to take place without impeding the area that is used for his barge operations. Rather, Mr. Packer said, Vineyard Wind is planning to maintain their two vessels and conduct their operations on the 250 feet of open property that is beside the barge operations. In addition, Mr. Packer stated that he was encouraging Vineyard Wind to see what other open land is on the island for their operations, particularly at the airport where they are going to have one or two helicopters.

Mr. Packer then invited the Task Force members to visit and take a walk-through of his Vineyard Haven facilities so that they can see there is ample room for his barge operations, including the possible carrying of solid waste from the island, that is separate from the adjacent area that will be used by Vineyard Wind.

20. In response to a question from Mr. Sayers, Mr. Packer stated that he thinks he has reached the maximum amount of freight he will be carrying, and that the amount of petroleum products is very stable, although the amount of sand could increase several years into the future. In this regard, Mr. Packer stated that although he does not know when the building will stop, he has become more efficient and, as a result, has done more than he did in the past.

Mr. Packer further stated that sometimes he will make four or five barge trips per week. For example, Mr. Packer said, during this coming week he has an oil trip and one barge trip, and another oil trip next week. Mr. Packer noted that he had a very busy December because he has been stock piling 4,000 to 5,000 tons of stone before crushing plants are closed in January and February, but that he probably averages three trips per week.

Mr. Packer also stated that it takes about an hour to load his barge with modular homes, and less than an hour to offload them. With respect to gravel, Mr. Packer noted that he moves 1,100 to 1,200 tons to Goodale's in around five hours with two rock trailer dumps, although it is a little different story during the summer traffic.

21. In response to questions from Mr. Sederholm, Mr. Packer stated that he cannot load or unload two barges at the same time in New Bedford, although there is a foundation for a second ramp there which could be used to set up a second slip. Mr. Packer also noted that, when a barge is not in use, it is placed in six dolphins that are there. Mr. Packer further stated that the facility has a 50-foot by 200-foot fill dock, that the south side is used for barges, that the north side is for general use, and that he probably has two to 2-½ acres of shoreside property there.

Mr. Packer stated that, if he were to have two slips for his barges in both Vineyard Haven and New Bedford and the demand were there, he could see increasing the number of his barge trips from three to six per week. But Mr. Packer noted that, at the moment, he was not extremely busy because the crushers were down for the winter.

Mr. Packer also stated that, when he has a large job, he has a bunker at his Vineyard Haven yard and, if a barge arrives at midnight that is needed for another trip, he unloads it. In addition, Mr. Packer said, he has two bunkers in New Bedford and he just finished putting 2,000 yards in it for a concrete company on the island to take care of its winter needs. Therefore, Mr. Packer observed that, if he had two ramps, gravel could be unloaded from one barge and the other ramp could be used for modular homes or solid waste or something else.

22. In response to a question from Mr. Brown, Mr. Packer stated that he has a Manitowoc 4000 crane in New Bedford, and that John Packer has two cranes in Vineyard Haven, but that the cranes normally are not used to load or unload his barges. For example, Mr. Packer said, gravel is loaded onto a barge by having trucks back onto the barge and dump their gravel, and then the barge is trimmed. Mr. Packer noted that the crane in New Bedford is used for heavy lifts, such as for offloading equipment when Cashman had a dredge in the harbor.

Mr. Brown stated that he was asking the question because he was wondering whether a crane could put truck containers on a barge, which would allow more of them to be placed onboard without requiring their drivers to wait around. Mr. Brown also noted that then, when the barge arrived at the other end, another crane could pick them up from the barge. In response, Mr. Packer stated that it was a thought, although he would have to think about it.

Nevertheless, Mr. Packer stated that this method could be used to load and unload containers of trash if the trash is not going to be baled, and that he has quite a few of roll-off containers. Indeed, Mr. Packer said, he thinks he had 19 to 20 containers on a barge when he transported contaminated bricks from the Martha's Vineyard Museum. Although Mr. Packer noted that those containers were loaded and unloaded by roll-on/roll-off trucks, he stated that it is worth considering using cranes, which have some advantages and disadvantages, such as needing to have a licensed operator. Mr. Brown then acknowledged that it may be better to just have one truck at a time back onto a barge and disengage each of their trailers, and Mr. Packer agreed that that is a way to do it if trash were to be transported in containers.

23. In response to another question from Mr. Brown, Mr. Packer stated that his New Bedford facility is next to a rail yard and that he has explored the possibility of a rail track coming to the north side of that facility. In this regard, Mr. Packer noted that, at the moment, Middlesex Corporation and two other companies have a contract to rebuild the rail line from New Bedford to Taunton, and that they are going to build a station. Mr. Packer also noted that one of the companies he works for handles rail cars out of Taunton to somewhere in the Midwest that are filled with trash. Accordingly, while Mr. Packer acknowledged that he was getting exotic, he stated that there could be a rail line just north of his New Bedford facility that could have a spur across Herman Melville Boulevard into his yard and onto his dock.

24. In response to a question from Mr. Vercruysse, Mr. Packer stated that he does not think there are any conditions or restrictions on the number of barge trips he can make in or out of Vineyard Haven, noting that he was kind of grandfathered. In this regard, Mr. Packer noted that he has been at his location a long time and has never heard a comment from the Town of Tisbury, although he has been very careful with backup alarms when it is late at night in order not to disturb the summer population. Mr. Packer also noted that, because of his dredging participation, he sends monthly reports to the Army Corps of Statistics in New Orleans, but no one has ever told him that he was making too many barge trips and he did not know of any rule limiting the number of his trips.

25. Mr. Sayers asked if any attendees in the Zoom webinar had any questions for Mr. Packer, but none of the attendees raised their hands. Mr. Sayers then thanked Mr. Packer for his time that day. In response, Mr. Packer noted that he and his family are very cooperative in working with the SSA and that, if the SSA wished to proceed, it would be good if it designated one of its employees to meet with them and prepare an analysis. Mr. Packer also assured the Task Force that his family is part of Martha's Vineyard and is full of history. Indeed, Mr. Packer recounted how one of their early ancestors visited Vineyard Haven in 1842 by way of the old Steamboat Wharf when it was privately owned for 150 years.

Mr. Packer also observed that his family have been on the harbor and like it very much, that they are here for the barging business, that they are not changing their mode of business and are here to stay, and that he was very pleased that he was there today to discuss this. In response, Mr. Sayers stated that the SSA has the greatest respect for Mr. Packer as well, and that he is a tremendous asset to Martha's Vineyard; and the other Task Force members then also thanked Mr. Packer for his participation that day.

The Task Force's Next Meeting

26. Mr. Sayers noted that, at the Task Force's last meeting, they had talked about having one guest participant at each of their meetings, starting with Mr. Packer today. Mr. Sayers also noted that the next proposed participant was Edward Anthes-Washburn, who is both the Executive Director of the New Bedford Port Authority and a member of the SSA's Port Council. In response to a question from Mr. Brathwaite, Mr. Sayers stated that he believed Mr. Anthes-Washburn would have knowledge of the future plans and timetable for the development of the North Terminal in New Bedford. Mr. Brown further stated that Mr. Anthes-Washburn may have information about the redevelopment plans for the south end of New Bedford.
27. Mr. Cahill then noted that the Task Force does not have a chair and he asked how the Task Force members felt about having one of them become their chair for the upcoming year, saying that he was just mentioning this for discussion and consideration. In response, Mr. Brown recounted how that Task Force had discussed this subject earlier and concluded that Mr. Sayers could moderate their meetings. Mr. Brathwaite further recounted how they also had discussed whether to have a rotating chair on a monthly basis, but he observed that Mr. Sayers was doing fine as a moderator. In this regard, Mr. Brown noted that the Task Force was more of a think tank than a real committee that needs leadership, other than to interact and come to agreement on things. Mr. Sayers stated that he was happy with whatever the Task Force wants, and he noted that this role as moderator was simply a preliminary matter until the Task Force itself decided what it wants to do.
28. The Task Force members then agreed that Mr. Anthes-Washburn would be asked to be the guest participant at their next meeting, and Mr. Davis stated that he would reach out to him.

**The Financial Impact That Barging Freight between
New Bedford and Martha's Vineyard Will Have on the SSA**

29. Mr. Vercruysse asked how the SSA's finances would be affected if freight were barged between New Bedford and Martha's Vineyard. For example, Mr. Vercruysse asked, if there is going to be more space on the SSA's ferries because it is carrying less freight, is it a likely scenario that those spaces will simply be filled with more passenger automobiles. In this regard, Mr. Santoro noted that if the empty truck spaces are taken up by automobiles, the SSA may be better off financially if it makes more money on cars than it does on trucks, and he asked whether that was the case. In response, Mr. Sayers stated that he thought, at this point, freight trucks were paying a higher percentage of their allocated cost of service than automobiles.

But Mr. Vercruysse stated that he was wondering how this whole scenario would play out financially for the SSA. In response, Mr. Brathwaite noted that, if the island were to transport baled trash by barge, the trash trucks are also being used to carry freight back to the island and they would still travel off-island to get that freight and bring it back. As a result, Mr. Brathwaite said, he did not think that barging trash from the island would necessarily eliminate those truck trips, as some of that truck traffic would still be needed to carry freight to the island.

Mr. Davis then advised the Task Force that, in 2019 on the Martha's Vineyard route, passenger automobiles on average covered 79% of their allocated cost of service, with excursion-fare automobiles covering 29% of their cost of service and standard-fare automobiles covering 109%. By comparison, Mr. Davis said, trucks on average covered 93% of their allocated cost of service, with four-space and five-space trucks covering 113% and 102%, respectively, of their cost of service, and the smaller trucks covering less than 100% of their cost of service. Thus, Mr. Davis stated that, at this point, the larger trucks are paying for the cost of their spaces, and the standard-fare cars are also paying for the cost of their spaces.

Mr. Davis stated that, if trash is barged off-island, the question is how many of the spaces being taken by the trash trucks will still be needed by those trucks in order to carry freight that they are currently backhauling to the island. In this regard, Mr. Davis noted that many of those spaces may still be taken by those trucks or they may be filled with other vehicles or, if not, the SSA may be able to run fewer trips.

Mr. Santoro then asked whether the SSA might have to limit or decrease the number of spaces on its ferries for island residents traveling on excursion fares if freight traffic continues to grow. In response, Mr. Sayers stated that, due to the SSA's limited ability to increase its level of service for Martha's Vineyard, those tough decisions will have to be made in the coming years; but Mr. Sayers noted that the SSA already has established the number of preferred spaces (which are used by island residents) that will be available on its ferries for the coming year, so they will not decrease this year. Instead, Mr. Sayers said, to the extent the SSA carries more freight trucks and the same number of island residents, probably the first consequence will be having fewer spaces available for standard-fare

automobiles. In this regard, Mr. Davis observed that this phenomenon already has taken place on the Nantucket route, where the SSA has seen a remarkable decrease in the number of automobiles that it is able to carry because of the increase in the number of trucks that are bringing goods and services to Nantucket.

Mr. Sayers stated that the SSA was trying to find the best solution for Martha's Vineyard, Falmouth and all of its port communities and that, while its financial stability is a very significant portion of that solution, it is not the only consideration. Mr. Sayers also noted that the SSA's Board makes public policy decisions all the time that have some financial impacts on the SSA but are beneficial to the island. One example of the public policy decisions made by the SSA's Board, Mr. Sayers said, is the SSA's 50% discounted rate for certain commodities that are grown on the island, which he observed is to encourage the island's proper economic development.

30. Mr. Brown then stated that it seems the only way to actually reduce the number of trucks on the SSA's ferries is to increase the amount of freight that is transported by either barge or other means from New Bedford, so that trucks are not going to the island and then coming back empty. Mr. Law also noted that he thought this was the reason the Task Force had asked Mr. Packer about his possible transport of solid waste from the island, as the SSA needs more deck space. Mr. Brathwaite then asked whether the Town of Edgartown already had proposed baling its trash when it went before the Martha's Vineyard Commission for the expansion of its facility. In response, Mr. Vercruysse stated that the Town had never proposed a baling machine; rather, it wants to get a composting operation up and running.

After Mr. Sederholm observed that it would be very expensive for the Town of Edgartown to acquire a baling machine, Mr. Brathwaite suggested that there might be a federal grant program that could provide external money, particularly since a baling operation would go a long way to helping the island with this issue. Indeed, Mr. Brown said, compacting the trash will help no matter how it is transported. But Mr. Sederholm observed that there are definitely trade-offs, because if the SSA were to carry more cars, the more it would affect the island's culture and quality of life

The Task Force's Next Meeting

31. The Task Force then agreed to invite Mr. Anthes-Washburn to participate in their next meeting at 4:30 p.m. on his choice of either February 11, 2021 or February 25, 2021 unless Mr. Anthes-Washburn is unable to make in on either of those dates.

Public Comment

32. Mr. Saltzberg then asked whether general freight can be categorized by how quickly it needs to be delivered to Martha's Vineyard. For example, Mr. Saltzberg said, a load of furniture does not necessarily need to be delivered in an extremely timely manner, and

perhaps that and other similar freight is the type of freight that might be appropriate for shipping from New Bedford instead of from Woods Hole. Mr. Saltzberg also asked if there is a category of freight that essentially could take this slower route, which perhaps would be more appealing to both the people sending it and the people receiving it because the freight is traveling up Interstate 95 and can stop at New Bedford instead of having to go all the way to Falmouth.

In response, Mr. Sayers stated that this was one of the things the Task Force was looking at in their inquiries; that in this regard Mr. Packer today had talked about his barge operation; and that at their next meeting with Mr. Anthes-Washburn, the Task Force would be discussing a different type of operation with a freight boat. Mr. Sayers also noted that a freight boat would present the possibility of the same-day delivery of freight, unlike a barge operation where warehouses would be needed both in New Bedford and on the island.

33. Woods Hole resident Bill Hallstein then asked what consideration is given in the formula and discussion to the environmental cost of moving a given amount of a product, comparing both the roll-on/roll-off truck on the SSA's ferry and the same amount of product if it were shipped by barge. Mr. Hallstein stated that, when comparing different methods of shipping, not only should the Task Force consider the time sensitivity of a product, but also the environmental impact of the different shipping methods. In response, Mr. Sayers observed that this issue had not yet been a specific subject of discussion, but that the SSA accepts that the environmental cost of shipping methods has to be considered as part of the equation, and he thanked Mr. Hallstein for bringing it up.

Then, at approximately 5:40 p.m., the Task Force unanimously **voted** (with Messrs. Brathwaite, Brown, Cahill, Davis, Law, Rozum, Santoro, Sederholm, Suso and Vercruyssen voting in favor) to adjourn their meeting that day.

A TRUE RECORD

Steven M. Sayers

Approved by the Task Force at their meeting
on March 18, 2021

Documents and Exhibits Used at the Task Force's January 14, 2021 Meeting

1. Agenda for the Task Force's January 14, 2021 Meeting (posted January 12, 2021).
2. Draft Minutes of the Task Force's November 19, 2020 meeting in public session (dated January 8, 2021).