

Bay State Council of Divers

Meeting Minutes July 12, 2006

Meeting held at the South Shore Neptunes' Clubhouse, Quincy.

Meeting called to order at approximately 8PM, adjourned 8:45PM. (Minutes taken by Mary Howard)

Artificial Reef Project: Jim Walker spoke with the Quincy Police Department about using their robot, camera and boat to photograph areas around the Pinthas. He will contact “Bobby” further about this. He is trying to find a time when the equipment are available and Vin Malkoski is available to go do some transect work.

Ted Maney - Northeastern University Updates:

1. 2 live webcasts will be aired on Saturday, July 15, at 11am and 2pm, of the exploration of the *Frank A. Palmer* and *Louise B. Crary*. Go to www.nurc.uconn.edu for the webcasts.
2. George's Island Family Fun Day: Underwater Exploration
3. Annual Open House at the Northeastern facility in Nahant, September 16. Come do a beach clean-up dive.
4. Summer Science Academy for 9th and 10th grade students still has openings.

Dive Flag issue and Diving restrictions, City of Gloucester:

Angelo Correnti has been in contact with Dave Stillman, owner of Cape Ann Divers who has spoken with. The City of Gloucester has an ordinance on the books which makes the dive flag regulations more restrictive than the state laws. Dave has spoken with the Gloucester Harbor Master, Assistant Harbor Master and Gloucester City Solicitor who all believe that if the bylaw is stricter than the state law, then it is OK and they plan to begin enforcing it, with the backing of the Lobstermen's Association. Their ordinance restricts divers from coming within 25 feet of any lobster pot, buoy, or trawl line. They also will require one flag per diver when diving in Gloucester.

Attorney Steve Coren (who has worked on issues of access with the Bay State Council in the past) is willing to get involved. He wants to represent the Bay State Council, i.e. the dive community, rather than commercial establishments, i.e. dive shops, dive charter boat owners, independent dive instructors. He is willing to reduce his regular fee from \$290/hour to \$190/hour, and expects the total to come to somewhere around \$3000 to \$4500.

Discussion:

- Bruce Gerhard (SSN): We need to discuss this issue with dive shop owners, charter boat operators, dive clubs and individuals for backing and monetary support. He pledged to begin by making a personal \$100 pledge.
- Margaret Malkoski: suggested shops might match donations by divers; they could put a limit if they felt it was necessary to protect themselves.
- Jim Walker: What about manufacturers? This is the beginning of trying to stop divers and diving by the lobstermen. The manufacturers should be interested.
- Need to push clubs to get members to join the Bay State Council and to raise money.

- This ordinance is already on the books in Gloucester, to make diving regulations as restrictive as possible.

A **Motion** was made by Al Bozza of the New England Aquarium Dive Club (NEADC) to retain Steve Coren to represent the Bay State Council in this matter. The motion was seconded by Bruce Gerhart of the South Shore Neptunes Dive Club (SSN). The motion was passed by those present.

Several hundred dollars were raised on the spot at the meeting to begin funding the cause.

Angelo will get the attorney to write a letter, will attach a copy of the Gloucester ordinance, and will get it out to the dive community via club representatives, etc.

Vin Malkoski - Mass DMF:

1. First stage for one of the LNG terminals south of Boston has been passed.
2. There are hearings tonight on the projected Buzzards Bay Wind Turbine project.
3. Winthrop cobble mining project is ongoing.
4. Cape Wind project is ongoing.

Next meetings, target dates (subject to change):

August 9 – Bay State Council, at the Neptunes' Clubhouse, with attorney.

August 14 – to include shop owners, charter captains, independent instructors, etc, at the New England Aquarium (if possible).

Stay tuned for updates and specifics.