

Bay State Council of Divers

Meeting Minutes for July 25, 2007

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

Meeting called to order at approximately 7:42 PM. (Minutes taken by Mary Howard)

Introductions for new attendees.

BSC background information: the Bay State Council was started as an offshoot of the Northeast Council of Divers. The BSC has been involved in access issues in Nahant in the past. There was a drive about 28 years ago to free the beaches for divers.

CURRENT ISSUES

Artificial reef project – BSC did bottom surveys a couple of years ago. City of Quincy will lend their boat (old Coast Guard cutter) and remote camera to survey area around the Pinthas. We are planning to start with a multi-species community for an artificial reef, using reef balls, cobble, rubble, etc. We would all like to see a ship eventually. It is a work in process.

Review of situation in Gloucester. We are still monitoring the situation. Since the last meeting (June 13), the flag law was not passed by the city of Gloucester.

Beach rights issue: On the 4th of July, Angelo got a call from a New Bedford firefighter who watched a lifeguard take snorkel gear from people on the beach. Angelo gave him suggestions on how to go about improving the situation.

POSTER: The BSC is working on a **POSTER** to inform divers of what the Massachusetts law actually is. There was some discussion of work/progress on dive flag poster. Having a dive flag on the poster would draw attention to the flag. The plan is to combine the two posters that Maryhelen Shuman-Groh (NEADC) put together and forwarded to BSC members for review; we will use the top half of “boaters” poster, add a dive flag, make it 8 ½ x 11. The best way to laminate is to go to Staples. Al will talk to Maryhelen and they can work on the poster and take it to Staples to laminate.

We want to try to get the posters made up as soon as possible before the dive season slopes off.

Holly forwarded a list of dive shops to Mary - ~34 shops. Make up about 50 to include some RI and NH shops.

We can see how successful the poster seems to be and go from there. Maybe even put some up where boat licenses are renewed.

Last Wednesday Angelo had a meeting with **Fred Calhoun**. Fred is a concerned diver, NAUI instructor, active in the diving community. He has some ideas about what he thinks the BSC should do and get involved with. He thinks that the BSC should spread out across the state. His main issue is access. To research town access laws and find out if anyone having problems with

access that way. Angelo said that is not the thrust of the BSC, rather marine beach access law. If Fred wants to pursue this agenda that is up to him, but he should not use the BSC name. If anyone asks for more information, Angelo would be happy to go out to speak to them. One reason we have a marine beach access law is because we gave up the rights to lakes and ponds, which are subject to the laws of the town in which the pond is. Angelo is available to speak with dive groups all over the state, and they all have his contact information.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Aluminum tanks from 1988 onward. Many shops will not fill the tanks; other shops will fill until October. There are new DOT regulations beginning in January. Some of these tanks are fracturing at the necks or around the shoulders. Some shops are giving discounts on new tanks. Shops can recoup some of the money by selling the aluminum.

Ted Maney:

Northeastern University Marine Science Center will have an Open House on Saturday October 6. The MSC is 40 years old this year. Vin Malkoski will be there with DMF information. There will be a Beach cleanup with the NEADC; this is the only day of the year people are allowed to dive off the beach at the MSC. – Coast Weeks (see flyer): directions are on the website. Everyone is welcome to come.

[SWIM - safer waters in Massachusetts - Polly Bradley - will be at NEMSC open house.]

CoastswEEP: All the clubs should get involved. A club can be a coordinator for a local beach. We can also distribute the dive flag poster at beach clean-ups.

NOAA will have an event in Gloucester. NOAA idea is a community-wide effort to clean up marine debris (see flyer) – Vinnie, NE and maybe BSC could go in on this together. A 10-page proposal process.

Matt Lawrence:

Nothing new. **Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary** is still mapping all the wrecks.

Victor Mastone:

MA Board of Underwater Archeological Resources. Vic and others were out on Minot's ledge looking for the old lighthouse; they do not *yet* have conclusive proof that they found remains, though they did find a lot of debris. They will go back to see if they can find anything more. They did put a memorial plaque down underwater at the location, on SW side; dedicated to the two keepers who lost their lives in 1851. They may get some good maps; might make a trail.

Three permits on the north shore, two around Baker's Island, are looking promising. Copper sheathing found.

Marcie has been checking out some badges. (what does this mean??)

Salem Sound Coastwatch is having their Swim 'n Fin Oceanfest event in Salem this weekend. (swimnfin.org)

Victor was in Sandwich today to look at a bridge, a colonial bridge (no iron in the construction) in the middle of a marsh near a Native American site. They found a corduroy path.

Vincent Malkoski:

MA Division of Marine Fisheries: Nothing new to report

Al Bozza:

NEADC:

This Saturday is the Great American Fish Count. There are 115 registered divers. Al will put up a booth at the event to pass out brochures to re-activate Catch the Wave.

The NEADC will be having their Tropical Fish Hunt which is a fund raiser for the Cotting School. – 225 divers – in Newport (not really Newport; Jamestown??). There will also be a field trip for the kids from the school. It will be a big event with speakers, kayakers. (see flyer)

Catch the Wave:

History: Originally a group of divers reached out and found a diver who needed help, monetarily and spiritually. Catch the Wave is not affiliated with BSC, but people were in both groups. The first event was a large party which raised money. Over the years the numbers decreased and the last party several years ago was much smaller.

Al wants to make sure he keeps in touch with people, gathers a distribution list to get information out to divers.

Mary Howard

NSF: A group of us went to Galapagos, but not allowed to dive, which was a disappointment. The NSF 50th Anniversary party will be on March 29, 2008

Jodi Burnham

Cape Dive Club is a brand new club which meets at Hyannis Golf Club. They have a cookout scheduled for this Saturday at Hathaway's Pond. They are trying to educate divers, get some speakers together. Meeting space was donated. They are shooting for last Tuesday of the month for their meeting. So far they have 30-40 members attending meetings; annual dues are \$40.

Angelo offered to go down to speak to them about the BSC.

Roy Chamberlain

SSN Annual Beach outing at Duxbury beach, **Sunday, August 5, \$10** – 8:30 to beach closing about 5PM. Hamburgers, hotdogs, etc., bring your families. Rain date is following Sunday. Have to pay for parking ~ \$8. Nice beach, good family day.

Wally Westphal came in last night from long island, was at LIDA last night. LIDA had made sure the beaches are available to all. They also have a ship reef program. Positive movement for diving.

Wally called Freedom Divers shop in Gloucester and they will let him put a booth outside their shop to distribute dive flag information to divers. He is trying to get a pilot program going in Gloucester to distribute dive flag information at shops. Need some personnel to help!

Action Items:

Poster to be finalized, printed up and laminated.

Mary is to email Al the dive shop list from Holly, to use for distributing the posters. (done)

Next meeting: September 26, 2007.